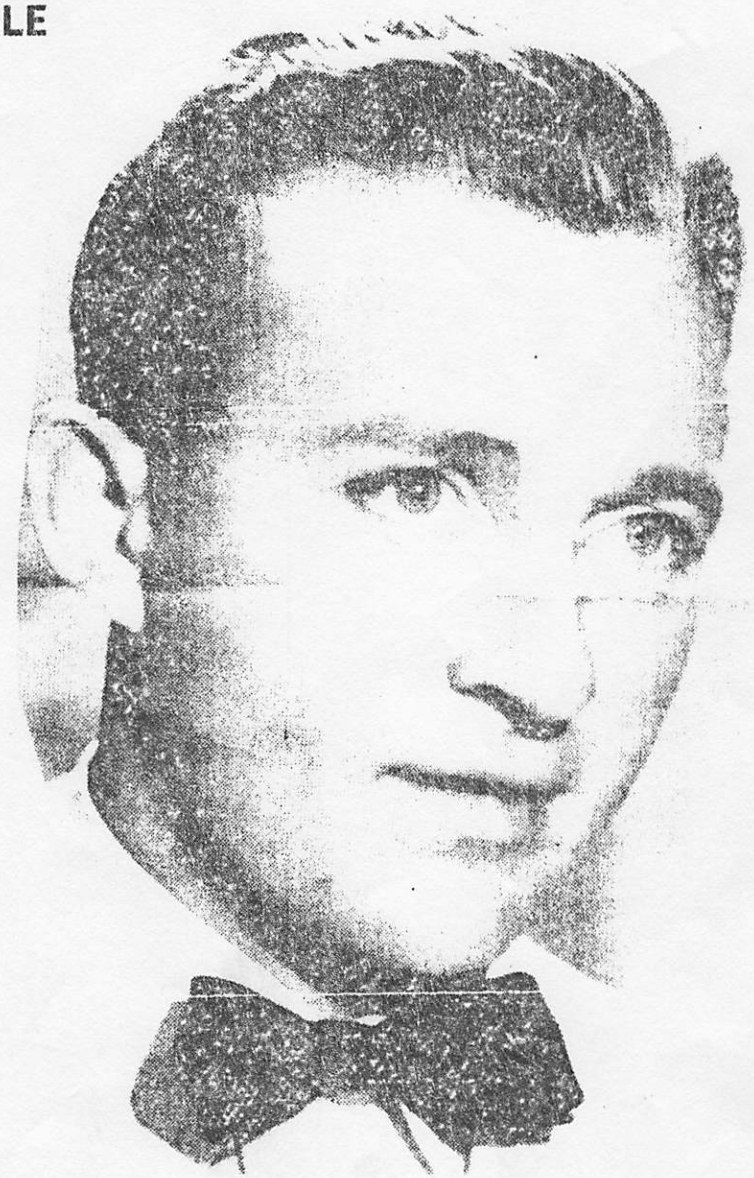
Bing

No. 60

THE INCOMPARABLE



Edited by

Reg Bristo

REASSURANCE - regarding October 14 1977

The curtain fell - performance over,
On the fourteenth of October.
Tributes showered, from far and near,
Marking the close of an epic career.
We little knew, that melancholy day
That he would never pass our way
As he had so often done....
With all the warmth of summer sun,
Tears - they were shed by many a fan
To mourn the passing of the man.
The curtain's down, the stage is bare,
- None great enough to stand up there,
Saddened hearts, not to be mended.
That day, we knew, an era was ended.
We miss his sight - but not his sound,
For truly we know -

HE HAD A VERY GOOD ROUND.....

Norman Toogood
(Southampton).

oOo

A CROSBY CAMEO

THE LAST WORDS JOHN EVER HEARD.....

Readers of THE SUNDAY POST - to whom our grateful acknowledgements - were invited to tell of THE SONG IN THEIR HEARTS. This sad story was one of the leading sub-missions

As a youngster, John McEwan (63) of Huntly, Aberdeenshire, idolised Bing Crosby. His other love was the countryside around him.There was nothing he enjoyed more than riding his pet mule over the fields.

One day when he was 13, John was thrown from the mule. Its back hooves thumped him on the head, just behind his ears. Apart from a painful bump he was apparently none the worse.

First clue anything was wrong came when the headmaster called on John's parents. He asked if anything was wrong with their son. He seemed to have lost all his concentration at school. Furthermore, he didn't seem to be hearing properly.

Sadly, it was confirmed John was partially deaf, probably due to being kicked by the mule.

By the time he was 17, his hearing had deteriorated further - and nothing could be done about it.

THE family gathered round the radio one night as Bing Crosby was singing 'Galway Bay'. John sat right next to the radio so he could hear his idol. Next morning he rose early and went about his usual chores - feeding the horses and his father's canaries in the aviary in the back garden.

That's when he realised something was wrong. Despite his poor hearing, he'd always been able to hear the canaries sing. This morning he heard nothing.

Then it dawned. He'd turned stone-deaf overnight. Over the years one thing has remained in his memory - Bing singing 'Galway Bay'.

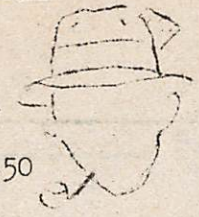
It was the last song John was ever to hear.

----oOo-----

A sad story indeed, especially as, alas, deafness is so often made the subject of jokes. It can be no joke assuredly for anyone and nothing less than a tragedy for anyone who loves music - and its makers.

Surely a sad fate for a Bing admirer.....

"BING", organ of the
INTERNATIONAL CROSBY CIRCLE
Secretary/Editor:
REG BRISTO,
7 Greenmeadow Close,
CWMBRAN, GWENT, NP44 4PJ



No. 60
June, 1981

Dedicated to the imperishable memory of the one and only BING.

Annual Subscription: £2.50 UK; European members equivalent of £3.00 sterling; Australia equivalent of £5.00 sterling for airmail posting; £4.00 for surface mail. American/Canadian 12 dollars for airmail, 8 dollars surface.

Please note the subscription rates; postage is a very important factor.
An "X" here indicates your subscription is due. Early remittance is of considerable planning assistance.

X X

Tape/Disc Consultants:
BERT BISHOP, 'Tideway', Imperial Aven., Maylandsea, Chelmsford, Essex
JOHN Bassett, 'Bingville', 15 Oast Way, Rochford, Essex.

Film Consultants:
FRED REYNOLDS, 69 Heathmere Av. Yardley, Birmingham, B25 8RQ
Keith Parkinson, 16 Cartwell Rd. St. Annes, Lytham St. Annes, Lancs

CHIEF PUBLICIST: Leslie Gaylor, 114 Medina Rd., Newport, ISLE OF WIGHT.

PRINCIPAL CONTENTS:

Page:
Bing's Statue Unveiled at Gonzaga 7
Leading Hand has World's Largest Crosby Collection 11
The Phil Silvers Show, Keith Parkinson.. 15
Flashback! You ought to be in Opera!... 17
Frank Bough on Bing..... 20
Resolution/Discussion in the Washington State Senate 24 : 25
When Bing Nearly Retired? John Bignell.. 33
Letters.. 37
Trading Post 43

The big event and the main story this time is the unveiling of Bing's Statue at Gonzaga University. It turned out a splendid and impressive event. And especially satisfactory was the great treatment accorded by the American organisers to our visitors. We have reported it as well as we can but clearly the true stmosphere cannot be captured in print. Thus, we hope to present a 1½ hours recording which will contain the main speeches - highly informative, sometimes highly humourous, and very touching - Roy Chappell singing, the whole thing making an unforgettable recording. Details elsewhere.

Everyone will be relieved and delighted to know that John Joyce, after a spell in intensive care/hospital, is following doctor's orders - and feeling pretty good!

Following the Editorial in this issue (next page) THE HOLLOW MAN is being serialised in certain New York papers. We have seen a couple of instalments - and frankly, it's just an extension of the "boozer" "cruel to his kids" syndrome. Much, much more important: a letter from Mr. Justic Francis X. Smith of New York Supreme Court says:

"I was delighted to hear on two different radio programmes, comments condemning those who are writing these vicious articles. Both commentators expressed the opinion that they were writing for personal greed and pointed out that perhaps Bing and some of the others who have been maligned felt the same way about the writers, who are TAKING ADVANTAGE OF THE FACT THAT THERE CAN BE NO REBUTTAL." - Well, there are plenty who can speak up for Bing!

Original Material (C) 1981

Editorial

We have reports of another book on Bing - and we quote: "The first of several new books portraying the decidedly dark side of one of America's most loved crooners will hit the bookstores next month.

In BING CROSBY: THE HOLLOW MAN, authors Don Shephard and Bob Slater show Bing as a 'Daddy Dearest' figure - the ideal father and husband in public, but in private cruel to his children and negligent to his first wife whom, the book reports, Bing deserted as she was dying of cancer, as a womanizer...a boozer...a faithless friend..and a viciously selfish social-climber...Bing drove Dixie to drink by his constant slights and philandering....Bing used his enormous influence with the press to keep his drinking and womanising out of the papers...." and so on and so on, ad nauseum. And we do mean Nauseum.

But this will not do! What about homo-sexual? What about abortion-procurer? What about drug-peddling? What about rapist? Even a suspected murder or two!

We mean, if you're really going to write modern 'fiction' these things should be IN! Whether it is true or not is quite immaterial. What about the fast-buck; the candid 'revelations' to SHOCK YOU!

How really nauseating it all is; as one of our members points out, these miserable, saurrilous, mean little writers would no more think of writing this rubbish if Bing were alive than they would go into orbit - without a capsule. Or with...

Truly we are living in an unbelievable age; a forgetful age....

Forgetful? NOT US.... the last 50 years were not a sham....we all KNOW that.....

No one bestows sainthood on Bing, but we have the overwhelming feeling that most, if not all these attempts to assassinate his character stem from the fact that, despite the eternal spotlight of fame and unbelievable demands on his time, HE TRIED TO BRING UP HIS FAMILIES PROPERLY.....

WHAT A MONSTER!

BING'S STATUE UNVEILED AT GONZAGA UNIVERSITY

As we write we are being regularly mailed with delighted postcards, letters, &c. re. the events on and around Bing's birthday. Some of the members who were present at these happenings are still in the States; we can best begin by giving a press report as follows - from America, of course.

Bing Crosby would have approved of the tribute Conzaga University arranged for their most illustrious alumnus Sunday.

A larger-than-life statue of the inco parable crooner was unveiled on a patio near the entrance to the University's Crosby Library.

The dedication, attended by many celebrities, was filled with fond reminiscences, music and humor from family, friends and admirers who travelled from as far away as England and Canada to see the lasting monument installed on the campus where Bing Crosby once said he spent 16 years (he counted his presence at the Webster Grade School, which actually is today's School of Law, plus his four years at Gonzaga High School, two years in Gonzaga's undergraduate program, then two years in law studies).

Gordon Atkinson from Ottawa, Canada, as master-of-ceremonies, set the mood when he said, "He was the idol of my youth, father of my career, and a friend in maturity. I'm sure I reflect the feeling of all of the family, friends, and admirers here today".

The impressive list of family and admirers began with Crosby's widow, Kathryn Crosby, who flew in by private plane in order to officiate at the unveiling. Waving to the students who filled every window and balcony in the buildings surrounding the area, she confirmed that pranks credited to her late husband were true, and that he "was a fun man".

"You are his friends and I thank you for taking me to your heart, too," she said.

The statue stands just one block from where Bing Crosby and his family once lived. The day selected for the dedication actually was the crooner's birthday.

A sister, Mary Rose Crosby Pool, Carmel, Calif., came to assist Kathryn Crosby and The Rev. Arthur Dussault, S.J. at the unveiling. Father Dussault, a long-time friend and former classmate was credited with finding the talented Spokane sculptress Deborah Copenhaver to do the bronze and seeing it through completion.

In addition to Governor and Mrs. John Spellman, Mayor Ron Blair, and

the Rev. Bernard Coughlin, president of Gonzaga University, the list of dignitaries included witty Phil Harris, longtime friend and companion of Bing Crosby, whose spicy recollections of "Der Bingle" brought cheers from students and laughter from the audience.

"I feel happy today, not sorry. He'd want us to be happy and would be glad we're all up and well, enjoying life," he said.

Jimmy Van Heusen, the man who wrote many songs Bing once sang, told the audience, 'Bing was always looking for the good in things - if he were to see this statue, he's say: Hey! That really is something!

ROY CHAPPELL, a Crosby impressionist from Manchester, England, sang "The Blue of the Night and the Gold of the Day".

Another report read:

SPOKANE (AP) - The late Bing Crosby's family, friends and former classmates sang his praises Sunday as a bronze, more than life-size statue of the crooner was unveilded during a three-hour tribute at Gonzaga University.

President Ronald Reagan sent a written testimonial and Bob Hope telephoned during the ceremony for a light-hearted conversation with the Rev. Bernard J. Coughlin, Gonzaga president.

Phil Harris talked about his long-time friend, English impressionist Roy Chappell sang Crosby songs and composer Jimmy Van Heusen recalled some of the songs he wrote for the singer.

Rich Little impersonated some dignitaries who couldn't make it to the festivities and Kathryn Crosby talked about the early days of her marriage to the Spokane native.

Comedian and impersonator Rich Little was a crowd pleaser, bringing messages from many celebrities who were not able to attend - (President Ronald Reagan who really did send a message to be read), Richard Nixon, Jimmy Carter and Gerald Ford.

A phone call came in the middle of the program from Bob Hope who quipped "I've been waiting in the wings for 45 minutes while Rich Little took his bows". With Father Coughlin acting as his "straight man " Hope told the audience "When you worked with Bing you always looked good. He was a simple man and the world put him on a pedestal, although he never expected to be there."

The afternoon ceremonies were only a teaser for the program that followed dinner in the evening. Kathryn Crosby stayed during the reception that honored her and the other dignitaries and greeted guests in an informal receiving line with Father Coughlin.

The audience also had an opportunity to hear Chappell sing many of Crosby's favorite tunes and, in a surprise rendition, Gov. Spellman came on stage to sing I'LL BE SEEING YOU.

Teddy Johnson and Pearl Carr, popular vocalists from London, also sang for the event and Rich Little again delighted the audience with his

BING CROSBY — ROY CHAPPELL

"A TOUCH OF THE BINGS"

humor and impersonations."

And the ICC were there, well represented: you have seen the picture above before (it also adorned the brochure of the BING CROSBY HISTORICAL SOCIETY'S Third Annual Tribute to Bing which took place the day before the Gonzaga unveiling.) Clearly Roy was again a big hit with the American audience, repeating the triumph he enjoyed last year. The The photograph was taken at Belle Vue, Manchester, in 1976 when Roy told Bing how he was featuring THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT in his stage appearances - and was warmly encouraged by Bing. Roy was also thrilled to appear on American radio and TV with Phil Harris and Rich Little. Great days for Roy at last - and deservedly so for he's a fine artist with a deep and abiding appreciation of Bing.

At one time Roy, under his real name of Peacock, was a motor 'dirt-track' rider at Manchester until an injury put an end to it; happily this led to full-time professional singing.

Having heard recordings of the proceedings we can assure readers that it was all very profound, and the various speakers - Gov. Spellman of the State of Washington, Rod Clefton, director of communications at the University, Robert K. Bowers (for the Trustees of Gonzaga), the Mayor of Spokane and so many others were most impressive. Father Dassault spoke the invocation and was equally impressive - Father Dessault was a prime mover behind the entire project.

> The statue of Bing shows him with one foot raised to rest on what appears to be a boulder, one hand resting on his knee, as if looking down the fairway. The figure is complete with typical Crosby soft hat and pipe at the accustomed angle. And quite unmistably Bing. It is a fine work, beautifully executed by the lady sculptress, Deborah Copenhaver.

Steering the whole ceremony was Gordon Atkinson who is the manager of CMFO-FM Stereo in Ottawa, Canada. Incidentally, the newspaper reports we have quoted earlier attribute the "he was the idol of my youth..." quotation to Gordon. He did use the quotation, originally made of course by Frank Sinatra, but used it because it applied so positively to him - Gordon Atkinson, as a result of meeting Bing in 1945.

> IN ADDITION TO ROY CHAPPELL, WE WERE PROUD TO HAVE PRESENT (in alphabetical order!) VIC BYNE OF SLOUGH, MRS. RENEE CHESTER OF HANWELL, LONDON; JENNY MILLS of COULSDON, AND PAT O'BRIEN (MRS) of SUTTON, SURREY; MIKE SLIPMAN (of LEGEND MUSIC, EDGWARE) and friend. Teddy Johnson and Pearl Carr were present, as you will have noted, but they are not ICC members - yet! IT WAS MOST HOSPITABLE OF THE AMERICAN ORGANISERS THAT THE UK VISITORS HAD SEATS, COMPLETE WITH THEIR NAMES, ON THE STAGE. A FINE GESTURE.

MIKE SLIPMAN provides us with a better-detailed and personal report than the newspapers (the ceremony, incidentally, was broadcast and on TV). Mike writes:

"....from Tacoma, I flew direct to Spokane and was met at the airport by Rev. Father Dessault, vice-President of Gonzaga University and transported (by Cadillac!) to the hotel. I was later picked up again and taken to the University where I met Rich Little, Phil Harris and James Van Heusen, Roy Chappell, Teddy Johnson and Pearl Carr - and the Governor of the State of Washington, John Spellman. We from the UK sat on the right of the stage - on the left, covered, was the statue, next to which were the celebrities already mentioned.

> After the very entertaining and fulsome speeches, the unveiling was undertaken by Mrs. Kathryn Crosby and Bing's sister, Mary Rose Crosby Pool. Harry Jnr. was listed as also assisting but, it seems, was unable to attend.

After the ceremony we proceeded to one of the large halls of the University where students gave us labels of our names and from whence we came! To yet another large hall where 70 big tables were laid out and after hors-d'oeuvres wwe had a banquet which defies description, with every kind of drink, including champagne, available.

(Cont. page 23)

MIRROR, MIRROR, ON THE WALL
WHO'S THE FAI...GREATEST OF THEM ALL?

NO DOUBT THERE ARE MANY PRODIGIOUS BING COLLECTORS who possess a fair claim to the title - many we do not know, perhaps. Our dear, late, friend, BOB ROBERTS was quoted in THE GUINNESS BOOK OF RECORDS (probably rightly) as the collector holding this title. Here is another claimant: we have known JEAN PAUL for many years now and his story appeared in CANADAIR, the 'house paper' of the Canadian air-line, Even so, we learned many new things in this interesting article.

LEADINGHAND HAS WORLD'S LARGEST CROSBY COLLECTION

A Canadair leadhand in quality control is believed to be in possession of the world's largest collection of Bing Crosby records, movie sound-tracks, song music sheets and recordings of his radio programs.

He is Jean-Paul Frereault, who began his Bing Crosby memorabilia collection with a 15-dollar purchase in 1942, and over the years built his unofficial Crosby museum into a collection reputed to be the envy of the Crosby family itself.

His collection includes:
* 2,250 records.
* 72 sound tracks made from the 72 movies Bing Crosby starred in.
* Nearly 500 music song-sheets.
* 1,604 radio program recordings - made between 1931 and 1957, in 15-, 30- and 60-minute segments.
* Seven tape-recorded letters to himself from Bing Crosby
* and numerous other letters between himself and Bing Crosby.

Why the collection ?

"I loved the man and all he represented as an entertainer," said Frereault, who brought part of his collection to the CERA/Canadair Family Day last December for thousands to see.

Frereault's collection is two years younger than his career at Canadair - he joined Canadian Vickers at the Viau - Notre-Dame Street plant in 1940. And his collection has won him considerable media recognition over the years, having been featured first in the Jan 1954 edition of Canadair News, then in a local tabloid, Nouvelles Insolites

in 1968 followed by yet another Canadair Bulletin in 1971, and again in Lundi, the French-language People-style magazine in 1978.

"Bing Crosby himself told me that my collection was probably the largest in the world," he says with pride.

He met Bing Crosby and his good friend Bob Hope when the famous duo came to the Montreal Forum not too long ago to star in a television special.

Through adroit manoeuvring the night before the Forum show, Frereault managed to wind up in the elevator between Bing and Bob.

"Bing didn't know who I was at the time because we hadn't met in person yet," says Frereault.

"I jostled Bing's elbow, pointed at Bob Hope, and said to Bing: 'Who's he? He looks like Bob Hope.'"

Soon after, he managed to meet officially with Bing and both shared a chuckle over the elevator incident.

Frereault has become the Canadian representative for the Inter-National Crosby Circle, a world-wide club of people who collect Crosbyana. The club has members in England, Australia, Japan, the USA and several countries in Europe and South America.

He recently collaborated with a group in England to produce a comprehensive listing of every record produced by the world-famous singer since his first record was cut in 1926, which was labelled 'Wistful and Blue', with musical accompaniment by Paul Whiteman and his orchestra. However, Bing's name didn't appear on the record label for two years - until 1928, the record label credited only Whiteman and his group, with the rider "..and Vocal Refrain".

In addition to the more high-profile items he maintains in his "museum" - the completely redecorated basement of his home - Frereault also has a series of songs reproduced from studio re-hearsals where the great crooner fluffed a line or two, or words of songs. These recordings are complete with great guffaws of laughter from the orchestra members.

And he also has a series of motion picture songs which are labelled with photos from the film, instead of the conventional record label. These are V-Discs which were sent to troops during the Second World War.

Not only did Jean-Paul Frereault collect Bing Crosby records, he even sang a few on television on the French-language program PARLE, PARLE, JASE, JASE, he was paid to sing Bing's theme song "When the Blue of the Night...." and on his second appearance on the same show, he gave a complete rendition of "Mexicali Rose".

Naturally, Frereault has never missed a Bing Crosby picture, nor the televised re-runs.

(The story was accompanied by a picture of Jean-Paul complete with headphones adjusting his amplifier, with record and tape decks well in evidence.)

(Cont...

Editor: We by no means want to suggest that the size of a collection is the sole criterion in Crosby admirers' stature; yet it does indicate years and years of dedication, expense, relentless searching and researching. And circumstances must vary considerably in so many cases. Yet we feel members enjoy reading of these collectors - and must confess Jean-Paul has a formidable collection of Crosbyana. We will not revive any arguments concerning I'VE GOT THE GIRL and WISTFUL & BLUE! J-P is at the mercy of these reporters...aren't we all? And he does, of course, live in Canada.

WHAT IS THERE NEW TO SAY ABOUT BING CROSBY ?

Such is the understandable lament on several record sleeves; indeed, it has cropped up in many articles over the years. And one can understand the dilemma to an extent - although kind members tell us we invariably find a new slant on Bing's fabulous career in this specialised magazine. Bing was a household name, a respected performer in an entirely unique fashion for so many years - nay, decades - that his many talents had received due acknowledgement and analysis

It was considerably different in 1926, however. Thanks to PAUL MORRISON (*Rowlands Gill, Tyne & Wear) we are now in possession of what is no doubt the first review of Bing's talents as a professional entertainer. It was, also, a review of considerable importance for it appeared in America's VARIETY, the trade paper of the entertainment profession in the States. Just to be mentioned in this journal was an achievement! And it was at that early period when Bing and Al Rinker had taken the momentous step of leaving home - for fame and fortune. Just what fortune and fame it is certain Bing - or Al - had no inkling. They were touring, as a duo, with Will Morrissey's Music Hall Revue and whatever Bing came to feel about the eulogies heaped upon him in later years there can be little doubt that, at the age of 24, he read this with considerable delight:

CROSBY & RINKER : SONGS: GRANADA, SAN FRANCISCO.

Two boys from Spokane and not new to show business, but new to picture-house work. They appeared with Will Morrissey's Music Hall Revue, and were a success in a show which was a flop. Bringing their methods to the Granada they registered solidly and on the crowded Sunday shows practically stopped the show.

The duo works with a piano minus orchestral accompaniment. Blues of the feverish variety are their specialty, and they are well equipped with material, presumably their own. Young and clean cut, the boys found a quick welcome. When they have completed a few weeks locally they will unquestionably find a market

for their wares in other presentation houses.

Wherever the public goes for "hot" numbers served hot, Crosby and Rinker ought to have an easy time.

Editor: A most encouraging spur for the two young men; it was while with Morrissey, of course, that Paul Whiteman was tipped off about them - and their subsequent enrolment in that fine organisation of Paul Whiteman and his Orchestra. With varying fortunes the idea eventually turned up of adding Harry Barris and forming what became the celebrated Rhythm Boys. The rest needs no repeating at this juncture!
But it WAS a couple of years later when Paul Whiteman despite a galaxy of vocalists in his famous orchestra gave more and more vocal work to Bing; and after hearing Bing's early "vocal refrain" of OL' MAN RIVER with the band that the famous assessment, attributed to Johnny Mercer, was made:

"YOUNG CROSBY, IN PARTICULAR, SHOWS PROMISE...."

And it was this song, said the late Johnny Mercer, that made him a Bing fan for life.

* Rowlands Gill - time after time your Editor is intrigued at the names of towns/villages when preparing BING for the mail and this is certainly a case in point. I wonder if Paul Morrison, or anyone else, can tell us how this name came about - and does it (as it would seem) have special North Eastern connotations?

THAT WAS BING !

(Spotted in GOLF-MONTHLY, 1977).....

One golfer, not invited to meet with Bing, asked that I give the great man a message. Would I tell him thanks for giving the particular old fan so much pleasure for 50 years.
"You must get a lot of remarks like that, " I said, half apologising for the delivery of such a message. "Well, maybe," said Bing, "but I always think its very nice."

It was only later I discovered he had sought the man out for himself, and thanked him for the compliment.....

And now he's gone, and, as Arnold Palmer said, "It'll take some time to realise how much he'll be missed."

THE PHIL SILVERS SHOW - featuring BING !

It is usually true that even the best of humour, or comedy, wears thin, becomes boring, on the second showing. Surely the legendary SERGEANT BILKO created by Phil Silvers is a true and lasting exception to this process. There are those who declare that if these programmes were shewn every night they would still roar at them.

By KEITH PARKINSON.....

At the beginning of this year the BBC showed BILKO PRESENTS BING as one of their Phil Silvers Show repeats, tucked away in the viewing schedules late on Sunday evening, and not I believe, shewn in Wales.
Apparently it was the second time that the BBC has repeated this particular episode since it was first transmitted all of 25 years ago.
Briefly, the story concerns the fast-talking, quick-buck-making Sergeant Bilko (Phil Silvers) promoting a concert by booking Bing through making contact with brother Everett Crosby. Bing's appearance is to be at an army camp concert to be held at Fort Baxter, the base of the luckless platoon of Sgt. Bilko. Complications inevitably ensue and the resourceful Bilko trains a Bing look-alike to impersonate Crosby. Then, just as the concert is getting underway, Bing arrives but instead of singing to the soldiers proceeds to recite 'The Wreck of the Hesperus'.

Silvers' 25-minute shows about Bilko are now regarded as some of the best examples of filmed television comedy programmes. The appearance of a guest such as Bing was an extremely rare event, though, but in this case Bing was doing a favour for a friend of long-standing. One of Phil's earliest jobs was to 'warm-up' the audience, together with character comedian Rags Ragland, before the Kraft Music Hall broadcasts.

Silvers gained a reputation as a joker as far as Bing was concerned. This is illustrated in a story told by Silvers about the time he went to Rome with Frank Sinatra, and President Roosevelt's envoy to the Vatican arranged an audience with the Pope for both entertainers.
Silvers, a Jew, was unprepared for the meeting and om the spur of the moment asked the Pope to bless rosary beads for Bing.
On his return to the States, Silvers presented Bing with the beads, telling him that they had been touched by the Pope.
Bing, well-used to the gags Silvers was always pulling, refused

to believe the authenticity of Silvers's story and walked away. Eventually, he realised that, for once, Phil was straight and expressed his thanks.

Another story concerns Bing, Phil Silvers, Rags Ragland and James Van Heusen. Ragland died at the early age of 41, a victim of drink, whilst Van Heusen receives composer credit on many of Bing's discs from the middle years. All four were on a tour of the USA entertaining members of the Armed Forces and they found themselves with time to kill in a town so small that the locals refused to believe that the "real" Bing Crosby was in their midst.

Bing suggested that the four of them went to see a movie to fill in the time. By coincidence, "Whistling in the Dark" was being shewn, a film in which Rags Ragland had a small part. Although admission to the theatre was only 25 cents before noon, Ragland insisted that they should be admitted free, a common courtesy in the movie profession. Ragland called for the manager and asked for free admission, pointing to a 'still' picture in the cinema foyer on which he appeared. Silvers and Van Heusen convinced the manager that they were comedian and pianist respectively - which left only Bing. Ragland then disowned Bing - "I never saw him before in my life" - which prompted the theatre manager to comment: "Okay, you three can go in but he (pointing at Bing) will have to pay."

I will end with another story about Bing when he was 'off-duty'. A scene from the film 'Mississippi Gambler' was being shot on the edge of the Universal-International backlot from the adjacent Lakeside golf course. The chatter of the players was interfering with the sound recording and director Rudolph Mate sent an assistant over the fence with an offer of 5-dollars a player if they would shut up. The assistant came back, reporting: "They all said yes but one. He's holding out for 20-dollars. His name is Bing Crosby."

Editor: Keith's reference to Phil Silvers 'warming-up' of the audience for the Kraft Music Hall (a practice still used today for TV shows at least) prompts us to mention a matter touched on in a few letters: ".....I feel that a lot of questions and answers are needed...what material exactly is in the Crosby archives? Are all the KMH songs available in reasonable condition? What/about the earlier Woodbury and Cremo...? There is a fair bit of KMH on tape, some of which is of poor quality....I feel some approach should be made to Crosby Enterprises - before its too late!" Brief answers - as read in the last BING, Crosby Enterprises has closed down - no doubt a law Corporation handles questions of copyright and royalties for the Crosby family. KMH material in reasonable condition is a pipe-dream - an impossible Dream, in fact. KMH was done in the days before tape recorders - and in any case, Bing hadn't fought his legal battles with sponsors to pre-record shows (thank goodness he did eventually!). No one at the time thought they may prove historic; who owns the copyright - Crosby family, Kraft Cheese Co., CBS or some other radio station? What a task to find out! We must relate later on in this issue how there is ANY Kraft material available - and that not in the best of shape.....

FLASHBACK!

YOU OUGHT TO BE IN OPERA

(This article is from PICTURE-GOER WEEKLY of December 28, 1935. It is a tongue-in-cheek story, perhaps, written in the days when it was early enough for some of the high-falutin' film critics to be a little afraid that it might be infra-dig, not quite the thing, to praise a 'crooner' too highly! Nevertheless, consciously or unconsciously it illustrates the wide acclaim and appeal of Bing in 1935.....

In an open letter to Bing Crosby, M.D.PHILLIPS makes out (he hopes)a good case for the Supreme Monarch of the Microphone Age to transfer his talents to grand opera.

My dear Bing Crosby,

I am more sorry than I can say to hear that you have been reaffirming your intention to resist all temptations to sing in opera. Now I do not think my worst enemy among the recipients of these letters or the readers of these pages could accuse me of having ever having been guilty of encouraging stellar delusions of grandeur.

On the contrary, I have devoted what seems like a lifetime to the noble work of keeping stellar feet on the good earth and stellar headgear out of the outsize department.

I like to think, however, that my exhortations to Claudette Colbert (who, with Mae West going into business for herself and Marlene Dietrich taking a European trip, is, next to you, probably the most important star on the Paramount pay-roll) in a previous series to get out of the de Mille bath-tub and get down to some real acting, have done some good.

At any rate, Claudette has not appeared in a De Mille picture since, and just look where she is now - the actress of the year, with all the reporters sprinting after her to find out if she is married or not, and everything.

One has grave fears, moreover, that the well-known and unique Crosby modesty, though one of the characteristics we most admire in you, may be allowed to stand in your way.

I remember once you showed me the only press cutting mentioning the name of Bing Crosby that you have ever kept; It was a review of a film featuring one of your rivals. "X", it read, sings very nicely but he can't act as well as Bing Crosby, who can't act at all."

I know of no other star who treasures only one 'notice' and that an unfavourable one. Most of them keep volumes of cuttings and place most credence in those written by their press-agents.

Joan Crawford has been known to weep at criticisms far less unkind, and even Greta Garbo haunts the bookstalls and buys all the magazines which carry articles about her.

But don't you think that it is possible to have too much modesty? I am just asking.

All the great stars of the screen have somehow managed to get to the heights without it. Certainly none of your predecessors as the idol of the feminine fans could be put in the shrinking violet class. Valentino, I recall, talked freely about his Art and Valentino, but mostly about Valentino, and whatever else John Gilbert suffered from, it was not an inferiority complex.

I hope, therefore, that no exaggerated sense of your own limitations will be permitted to be an obstacle to your operatic career. Let me hasten to reassure you - to express my own confidence in your ability to be grand in grand opera.

For one thing, the idea is in conflict with the best traditions. For a screen singer not to want to sing at Covent Garden and the Metropolitan is as unnatural a phenomenon as a screen comedian who does not want to play Hamlet, or a screen ex-chorus girl who does not hanker after the mantle of Bernhardt.

And the spectacle of a film star soullessly settling down to grab the dollars without formally acknowledging homage to the higher ideals of art, is so far from being an inspiring or an elevating one as to profoundly shock me.

Which brings us to another and, I think, very important aspect of the situation. You see, Bing, you occupy a unique place in the history of entertainment - one might almost say in the social life of the world today.

You are the King of the Microphone Age.

I wonder if you have ever thought about it in that way? In the era before the wireless and the talkies, you might have achieved some measure of success in some field of endeavour unconnected with the stage (in spite of the opinions of some of the more impressionable critics in regard to your acting, I am inclined to agree with the verdict of the author of your solitary press-cutting).

You might have been a successful stockbroker or a departmental store magnate.

You might even have achieved a certain amount of local fame as a progenitor of twins.

But the public at large would never have heard of Bing Crosby. Now all the wonders of Edison, Friese-Greene and Marconi have created a world fit for crooners. You are the symbol and the idol of it.

Caruso never had a fraction of the audience you reach today, nor, for that matter, a tithe of your earnings.

The microphone has carried your song and the movie camera your image into the homes and picture houses of five continents.

A million maidens' prayers are answered every time you gurgle something in mournful monotone about love being in bloom.

A million feminine hearts beat faster when you gaze soulfully into the middle distance and make a noise like somebody in pain trying to sing "Way Down Upon the Swanee River".

TEN MILLION CLAWS spring instantly to the ready whenever some poor misguided critic omits to doff his hat and speak your name with reverence.

Not since the Piper of Hamelin has there been a musical instrument with such spell-binding powers as the Crosby voice

It is rather a responsibility, is it not? How better else could that wonderful gift be employed than in leading the public to bigger and better things musically? What a noble mission for a young American!

Do you still feel that you can go on frittering away your talents in the futile and transitory trivialities of the films when you could be making the masses-opera-conscious? I hope not.

No, there can no longer by any doubt about it Bing. Modesty must be sacrificed. Your duty is clear. You ought to be in opera. You owe it to your public.

You owe it (if I may mention it) to me.

You see, I never go to the opera, but I HAVE to go to the pictures.

My love to the twins.

Yours,
MALCOLM D. PHILLIPS.

Editor: Enough to make a cat laugh these days; its a safe bet that the writer did indeed get a 'million' claws after him. Its an even safer bet that within a short time this must have come top of his list of STORIES I WISH I'D NEVER WRITTEN! He does make one serious mistake though - Bing's following was just as strong then to the male population as it was to the maiden's. As indeed, it remained. And you will have noted Mr. Phillips's allusion to Edison, Friese-Greene and Marconi - generally credited with the invention of the gramophone, moving films and radio respectively. We have even more reason to be grateful to those pioneers now!
But the suggestion of Bing in opera is one that recurred many times; and indeed, Bing did 'dabble' with the odd light operatic efforts. Listening to his powerful voice, especially early on, there is little doubt Bing would have become a luminary in that field of music; but to a vastly smaller audience! But who knows, perhaps Bing would have converted all his millions of admirers to grand opera. And that's quite a thought!

FRANK BOUGH ON BING

Frank Bough is, of course, the extremely well-known BBC presenter (NATIONWIDE, GRANDSTAND and other TV programmes) - very genial, knowledgeable, urbane and never at a loss for a cheerful word. He has written a book entitled CUE FRANK! in which he makes delightful reference to his encounters with Bing as follows - with our grateful acknowledgements.

'Nationwide' once asked me to go to the Palladium to interview Bing Crosby. He was making one of his infrequent visits to London where, as an old man now, he packed that huge theatre every night for a fortnight.

I had met the maestro before. He had been delightfully accommodating, talking to me and the viewers on 'Grandstand' in the intervals between our various events. He loved horse-racing and took particular interest in the meeting we were covering that day. As we came to our second race, there in the list of runnbers was a horse called 'Uncle Bing'. It was pure coincidence, but if ever there was a good reason for a bet that was it.

"Is there someone here who can put me a few pound notes on that one?" he asked. Len Martin came over to the desk and Bing gave him a five-pound note. "On the nose, please. That's most kind of you".

Uncle Bing romped home. The Old Groaner was delighted. Len Martin came over with the winnings and asked Bing if he would sign the five-pound note. Len had stood the bet himself and I know that Bing Crosby's own note, signed by the maestro himself, is one of Len's prized possessions.

In preparation for my Palladium interview with Bing, due on the Wednesday, I decided to go along and see the show earlier to get some of the atmosphere of his performance. The house was full of Crosby fans, on his side before he even appeared. When he did it was totally without fuss - there was no fanfare or big build-up. He just stepped neatly from the wings, a dapper, slim figure, only his face gave away his age.

"Good evening," he said. The Palladium roof lifted several inches. He was good, very good. Encores and fervent applause marked the end of a remarkable event.

On Wednesday interview night, I took my wife (Nesta) along with me. I had such a tremendous feeling of occasion that I wanted her to share it too. I went back stage to his dressing-room.

"Hey," he said, "how's that Uncle Bing? What a horse that was!"

He agreed to do the interview during a fifteen-minute slot occupied by Ted Rogers. I asked if we could stand in the wings to see Bing make his entrance. "Sure, sure," he said.

Nest and I went to the stage level and stood in the wings, glueing ourselves to the wall to keep out of the way and avoid distracting him.

> It was fascinating watching Bing gear himself up to his public appearance. As we watched he paced around nervously, never still, going through his scales. It was a beautiful few moments, just him, Nest, and me. The stage manager appeared - "Stand by, Bing" - the tabs opened, a quick shrug of his shoulders, and from the wings I then witnessed the same blinding effective appearance on stage that only the much-loved greats of show business can achieve, exactly the same performance that I'd seen from the stalls three days earlier. The Palladium roof lifted again.

At the inferval we were waiting for him in his dressing-room. He gave me a crisp, considerate, and charming fifteen-minute interview and then slipped out again for his next spot. What a performer.

> A few days later on a golf course he coll sed and died.....

(Special thanks to Margaret Illson, Leics).

HERE IT COMES - AGAIN!

Once again the story of a Bing-Russ Columbo soundtrack is being circulated - a hoary old story it is, too! We say that because this is about the fourth - or fifth- time in the last dozen years that it has been ressurected. The tale is that in 1931 Bing and Russ Columbo took part in a 'film test' to be known as THE ROMANTIC RIVALS, or even THE BATTLE OF THE CROONERS. The story goes, too, that it was performed before a live audience at the Coconut Grove with Gus Arnheim and his Orchestra....that the film was carefully preserved...kept in a private collection...it passed from this collection on decease....thence to the Morser Archives... has been cleaned, tittivated up with new accompaniments and so on and so on. A master was made for a 12" LP - ten only were pressed... each copy numbered and issued with an affidavit, master destroyed...

The titles are indeed mouth-watering, too! As they would be in 1931. But you must forgive our sceptism - to the US member who furnished us with this latest bulletin. We are not saying such an event did NOT take place - on the contrary, we think it highly possible that it did.

But in all the times this tasty morsel has been brought up it has been diligently followed by expert Crosbyites both on this side of the Atlantic and Stateside. And nothing, but NOTHING, has ever been traced, leave alone finalised.

Nobody would be happier, indeed thrilled, than us if this 'wondrous' soundtrack would emerge.

But - alas - we are fairly certain that it will not....

THE LEADER MAGAZINE (remember it? Its been defunct now for many years) was asking some pertinent questions in August, 1946. In an article entitled CROONING: A Phenomenon of our Times by one Austin Welland there were some dissertations on the names that had been made because of the ability to use a microphone correctly. It concluded with the pertinent query:

"Whether a British crooner can ever soar beyond the not inconsiderable success of a crooner and float into those Elysian fields where Mr. Crosby reigns alone, depends on many things. It depends on getting into the films in a big way; and not merely getting into the films in a big way but getting in with a producer, director and script-writer who will see that the film is good quite apart from the presence of a crooner. It depends, also, of course, on having the personality of Bing Crosby. That is not so easy.....

Bing - in an interview heard on radio - on the making of a Road film: "We would all get our scripts and read them. I would think of a thing or two to put in; Hope would do the same. When we started shooting Lamour would be in the middle, like watching a tennis match, wondering what was happening. It wasn't the script she had learned and rehearsed....the writer, too, would often walk off in a huff. He couldn't recognise anything he had written....."

And in 1947, PICTUREGOER was saying:

Most of the world's success stories, if they don't exactly follow the rags-to-riches pattern, do at least pay much attention to such sterling (or should one say dollar?) qualities as hard work and seriousness of mind, not to mention devotion to art, money, or ego, or a judicious mixture of all three.

Bing Crosby's story is different. He carefully displays none of these virtues, and in this fundamental difference lies the extraordinary fascination he has for all those nameless millions who wish they were as rich, popular and happy as he so obviously is. This fascination, naturally, is greatest for the Americans with many of whom the cult of success is a whole philosophy of life. They look at Bing and observe that he looks like any guy you'd meet playing golf, fishing or just sitting in the sun - but not, be it noted, doing a serious job of work. And they say to themselves: "What's Bing got that I haven't got - apart, of course, from an income reliably estimated at something like £1,000 a day?" But while this legend of a happy-go-lucky idler has been carefully cultivated - Bing must do a certain amount of hard work!

MIKE SLIPMAN AT GONZAGA UNVEILING (Cont. from page 10)

Following this splendid meal, the entertainment was equally tremendous, with Phil Harris, Rich Little, Teddy Johnson and Pearl Carr - and Roy Chappell. All absolutely in top-class form and providing wonderful entertainment.

> Earlier, Kathryn Crosby had made a brief speech thanking everyone for what they had done for Bing, etc., and then had to leave as she had a prior engagement.

This is only the briefest description of an event that was truly one of the most fantastic things I could imagine. And - when this momentous and unforgettable day was finally over, we were taken back to our hotels again by Caddilac!

Member VIC BYNE of Slough had a similar experience, and writes:

After attending the Historical Society's tribute I went on to Spokane for the 'main event'. This, as you will hear no doubt from other sources, went off in splendid style. There is no need for me to write about the speeches &c as I have quite a good recording of everything that happened; this, if you think it of interest, might be offered to members and thus help the funds of the ICC.

VIC BYNE's suggestion is the only answer to conveying to our members here just how impressive the whole unveiling ceremony was and urgent consideration is being given to its copying for the benefit of members and the ICC.

As noted earlier, the whole event was broadcast and televised in Washington and the transcription is the only real way of conveying the tremendous atmosphere. The tape includes all the major speeches - with Phil Harris and Rich Little incredibly funny; the warm introduction of all our members with a special mention of RENEE CHESTER'S efforts with getting the plaque installed at the London Palladium - AND ROY CHAPPELL paying his tribute in song with WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT...sounding the accomplished artist he is.

Jimmy Van Heusen told a remarkable anecdote: Umpteen years ago, Mary Martin took her 5-year-old son on to the Paramount set to see Bing... he was as mischievous as any 5-year-old and got on everyone's nerves. Finally, Bing, the most patient of men, said Jimmy, lost his cool and said: "Why doesn't someone take him away and shoot him!" Nearly 40 years later, that 5-year-old WAS shot, for he is the obnoxious JR in the well-known DALLAS TV series - real name Larry Hagman, of course.

And he was shot - by Mary Crosby, Bing's daughter!

Snag was - he recovered! We jest, of course....you will recall, too, that Larry appeared with his mother in the last Variety Performance... and forgot his lines!

IN THE LEGISLATURE
of the

STATE OF WASHINGTON

SENATE RESOLUTION

1981 - 43

BY Senators Wojahn, Hughes, Hurley, Gaspard, Rasmussen, Bottiger, Bauer, Benitz, Bluechel, Charnley, Clarke, Conner, Craswell, Deccio, Fleming, Fuller, Gallaghan, Goltz, Gould, Guess, Haley, Hansen, Hayner, Hemstead, Jones, Kiskadon, Lee, Lysen, McCaslin, McDermott, Metcalf, Moore, Newhouse, Patterson, Peterson, Pullen, Quigg, Ridder, Scott, Sellar, Shinpoch, Talley, Talmadge, Vognild, von Reichbauer, Williams, Wilson, Woody and Zimmerman; Lieutenant Governor John A. Cherberg, Sid Snyder, Secretary of the Senate; Marilyn Brachtenback, Deputy Secretary of the Senate; and Bill Gleason, Assistant Secretary of State.

WHEREAS, Bing Crosby, one of the world's most famous entertainers, was born in Tacoma, Washington, May 3, 1903; and

WHEREAS, The Crosby family roots in the Northwest go back to the early 1800's; and

WHEREAS, Three family homes remain in Washington:

(1) The home that Nathaniel, Bing's grandfather, built in 1864 in Tumwater;
(2) The birthplace on North "J" Street in Tacoma; and
(3) The family home in Spokane, now restored by Gonzaga University; and

WHEREAS, Bing Crosby received all of his academic education in the State of Washington; and

WHEREAS, Bing Crosby was one of America's foremost ambassadors of goodwill to the world through music; and

WHEREAS, Bing Crosby was a friend of countless public figures both at home and abroad; and

WHEREAS, Bing Crosby still brings joy to millions of people throughout the world by way of phonograph records, books and movies, even after his death three years ago; and

WHEREAS, Bing Crosby is being honored state-wide this year by various programs and by many radio and TV stations;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, By the Senate of the State of Washington, That Bing Crosby be honored as a world renowned entertainer and a native son of the State of Washington; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That the Secretary of the Senate certify this resolution and present a copy to Kathryn Crosby, The Bing Crosby Historical Society, Gonzaga University, and Governor Spellman.

I, Sid Snyder, Secretary of the Senate, do hereby certify this is a true and correct copy of Senate Resolution 1981-43, adopted by the Senate April 11, 1981

(Sgd) Sid Snyder,
Secretary of the Senate.

(Sgd) JOHN A CHERBERG
Lieutenant Governor.

REMARKS MADE DURING THE ADOPTION OF SENATE RESOLUTION 1981-43

REMARKS BY SENATOR WOJAHN

Senator Wojahn: "Mr. President, members of the Senate. This is a resolution adopting and acknowledging Bing Crosby as a native son of the State of Washington. And I think it is appropriate because he is probably one of the world's renowned ambassadors of good will through his singing and entertainment.

"He is recognised worldwide. He has spread a lot of joy and entertainment to people throughout the world, and during these rather tedious and disruptive times, I think that it is important. I think it is also important to let the world know that this man is a native of Washington state; and actually there are three homes existing in the State of Washington that are acknowledged to be homes built for the Crosby family. His grandfather, Nathaniel, has a home still standing in Tumwater that the family lived in in the early days, shortly after the 1800s; and the family home where Bing Crosby was born is in the twenty-seventh district in the City of Tacoma on North J Street; and the family home, now restored by Gonzaga University, is located in Spokane.

"I think that this is the one really good thing we can do, and at the same time if you remember the last line, we do honor Governor Spellman as our renowned crooner from the State of Washington.

"I urge the adoption of the amendment."

REMARKS BY SENATOR HURLEY

Senator Hurley: "Mr. President, and members of the Senate. Bing Crosby attended schools in my legislative district, including Gonzaga University and Gonzaga Prep. Gonzaga U is just two blocks from my house.

"His singing career started there, and he was a member of the trio and would sing all over town, any place that he could. Although he was not too academically inclined, he was certainly musically inclined. He played the cymbals, he played the piano, and he whistled beautifully. And you remember some of his records had some beautiful whistling in them.

"The orchestra leader, Paul Whiteman, recruited him when he heard the quartet that Bing had established and were singing. The quartet was called 'The Rhythm Boys', and this is where he developed his crooning style, was with the Paul Whiteman orchestra.

"He has been very generous, not only to Spokane, but to Gonzaga University. He donated 1,000,000 dollars for the Crosby Library there at Gonzaga, and there is one upstairs room that houses the gold records that he has donated to Gonzaga as a permanent possession and sort of a museum in this room.

"I am sure that his hit 'Winter Wonderland' was one of his favorites because of the many winters that he spent in Spokane when we used to have an awful lot of snow there.

"He is one of the most wonderful people that has brought so much pleasure and so much music and so much happiness to the world, I just had to say a word in commendation for Bing Crosby."

REMARKS BY SENATOR QUIGG

Senator Quigg: "Well, Mr. President, I am just glad that at this stage of the session, we had a chance to handle this matter now and not in

the dark of the night, or as Bing would have said, 'in the blue of the night'".

MOTION BY SENATOR WOJAHN

Senator Wojahn: "Mr. President, I move that the rules be suspended and the names of all the members of the Senate be added to this resolution."

THE RESOLUTION WAS ADOPTED.

Editor: This was, as you will appreciate, the resolution and accompanying remarks, that formed Washington State legislature business on April 11 last - 1981. We should point out that the contents have been accurately reproduced; thus Senator Hurley's knowledge of Bing's early days is, at best, open to question! But his sentiments are unmistable. That a copy was passed to Ken Twiss for the archives of The Bing Crosby Historical Society must be the cause of great satisfaction to our good friend, Ken. And we know that the precise manner in which Bing's home state-legislature paid tribute to him will be of interest to our members. The original was too large for us to faithfully produce an authentic copy.

SEEMS REASONABLE TO ASSUME THAT ALL THOSE LETTERS OUR MEMBERS WROTE TO THE BBC PAID OFF! A SEASON OF BING'S FILMS - AS YOU ARE CERTAINLY WELL AWARE - BEGAN ON MAY 17TH WITH A 'PREMIERE' FOR BRITISH TELEVISION OF "GOING MY WAY". BY THE TIME YOU ARE READING THIS NO DOUBT YOU WILL HAVE SEEN ALSO "DOCTOR RHYTHM","HERE COMES THE WAVES","PARIS HONEYMOON"- AND PERHAPS OTHERS. NO DOUBT THE VIDEO-RECORDERS HAVE BEEN HUMMING AWAY!

"BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD"

The hard-back publication by JOHN JOYCE for the ICC of the combined discography and the A to Z has, as expected, been received with acclaim. Correspondents are warm in their praise for John Bassett and Bert Bishop as well as John - and rightly so for this is certainly one of the most important - and impressive - of our publications.

However, some difficulties have arisen; mainly because it was our own fault that the order forms gave the price as £3.50 and this applied to members at home here in Britain. Thus, when overseas members, even Americans, remitted the equivalent of £3.50 and asked for the book to be "rushed airmail" - we made the discovery that airmail posting cost - £2.78p! In most cases, however, the orders have been honoured and some financial loss incurred. To halt this drain the prices are restated as follows:

For UK members	£3.50
" European "	£4.00
" Australian	£4.50 surface, £6.50 airmail
" USA/Can	£4.00 surface, £6.00 airmail.

It will be appreciated that the cost of £3.50 in no way represents the true cost of the book; it is indeed a concessionary boon to members. Future orders will only be executed, we're afraid, on the basis of the above remittances being received. Furthermore, overseas cheques should be made payable in sterling to obviate costly bank charges, AND, very important, all remittances should be made payable to JOHN JOYCE ICC a/c The co-operation of all members will be appreciated - we're delighted the book is in such demand. Obviously no members want to be without it!

SMALL ITEMS OF INTEREST..... supplied mainly by members.....

Entry in THE SUNDAY TIMES road-atlas: "COCKERMOUTH (Cumberland) Map 54 C1; Bing Crosby fished for salmon here while filming in 1966. Wordsworth was born here in 1745; see his house and effects &c....."

Bing was ALWAYS on the map, as Chas. Martin (Balsall Common) says in an accompanying note; 1966 was indeed a tremendous year for Crosby fans and mighty pilgrimages were made to this Cumberland town. Hundreds met Bing for the first time - and the little town wondered j' :t what had descended upon it! !

From THE GRAMOPHONE of June 1980 in a review of Bing's 20 GOLDEN GREATS album: "....commenting on the era as one in which juke-boxes began seriously to catch on and in which radio stations in America poured out hour upon hour of record programmes, Oliver Read and Walter L. Welsh in their indispensable volume 'From Tin Foil to Stereo' tell us that 'at times it has been asserted that in our large cities during certain hours of the day, there have been times when it has been impossible to get out of reach of Bing Crosby's voice.'" - Editor - Did anyone WANT TO? (from Cyril Parker, Wolverhampton).

> With Gonzaga unveiling a statue, plaques at the London Palladium, Brighton, and many other places the thought occurs that if anyone should erect a statue to Bing Crosby it should be - Decca Records! Imagine what Bing did for that company through so many, many, years... when he could so easily have formed his own record company whose success was guaranteed....

BBC RADIO (WALES) broadcast START THE DAY RIGHT one morning early in May - and asked WHO IS THE FEMALE SINGER? (Such ignorance!) Anyway, it stirred something up in no mean fashion, correspondents writing in from all over the Principality. Among them was Les Street our Cardiff member who put them right about Connee Boswell and added: "..if you want to know more about Bing and his records get in touch with Reg Bristo in Cwmbran...."

> They did - and the result was I was warmly invited down to the Cardiff studios to do a 10-minutes or so "chat" on Bing and his records, and naturally, the Circle. A letter of thanks from the BBC a few days later told me it had been well-received.

"I was in Texas over Christmas - couldn't get up to LA this time.... Bing's voice was coming over loud and clear in all the shopping malls and arcades. Just like home from home - as you can imagine!" - Ron Newton (Telford, Shropshire).

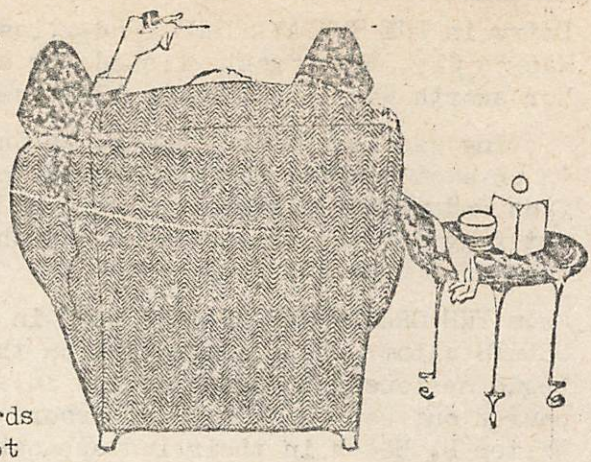
THAT WAS BING!! Announcer:"Well, all we have to do now is to listen to Bing Crosby sing...." Bing: "Well, that's a questionable pastime...but in the remote case that someone wants to, I'll sing...." (from a remote air-shot).

"If they - the cheque-book authors (sic)-are finding nasty things to write about Bing, one wonders what they will have to say when certain other contemporary singers pass away!" (L.M. London) - Editor: The mind doth truly boggle....but then, it won't new new or sensational... the illustrious 'boozers' and photographer-punchers are well known!

THE GREATEST SINGER OF SONGS OF ALL TIME...BING - Jimmy Van Heusen at the unveiling....

NOTE THAT THE ADDRESS FOR THE BOOK "BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD" (see page 26) is J. JOYCE, c/o John Joyce & Son, Saltmeadows Rd., Gateshead TYNE & WEAR, NE8 3AH - don't find yourself regretting delaying....

KEEPING *track*

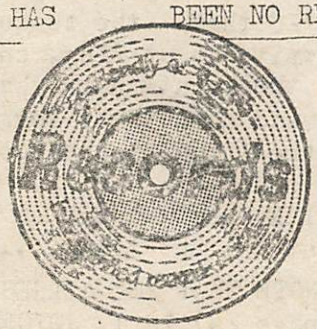


We are getting increasingly concerned at the form - necessarily - this feature is taking. Because of the paucity of issues by the well-known recognised companies, the records featured are from lesser-known, if not unknown, companies. This causes at least two problems: (1) They are not freely available, and this is of particular portance especially as mail seems to indicate that at least 50 per cent of our members have a job getting the products of the recognised companies mentioned, e.g. Decca, RCA, EMI, and so on. I've certainly had a flood of mail asking where people can get the BBC record - THE FINAL CHAPTER. This is because of the bizarre distribution methods of the companies, abetted by the pop-inclined people who do the ordering for most record shops these days. So their hope for the independent labels is slim if not non-existent. (2) Because these independent, small-company, albums are usually imported they are expensive; and in these particular economic times this is a problem even tho' they may find the albums. This is mentioned to illustrate that we are aware of the situation and the frustration, indeed, aggravation that may be caused members by reading of such issues. And, without going into details and pointing the finger at no-one, we HAVE had letters of complaint about some of these obscure origin records on account of poor quality, with special reference to them running at the wrong speed, making Bing sound like, to quote a correspondent, "a boy soprano!" No doubt this was an exaggeration but remember - and Bert Bishop always points this out - the quality of the album MUST be considered when laying out money for far-from-inexpensive records. After this lengthy, if necessary, preamble,

BERT BISHOP reviews as follows:

Following a particularly quiet period during which a couple of minor, though interesting, oddities came to my attention there now appears on the record scene another batch of Spokanes to perhaps whet the appetite - and bend the bank balance. Though it may be said that these albums , being produced for the committed collector, will have a much longer sales' life and not be here-today-and gone as with the Japanese imports. With that in mind their purchase can be safely spread over or even witheld until some celebratory occasions sets them up as a suitable gift....even if self-presented! Here, then, for those patient folk, for those who will splash out all in one go, and for all who listen to Bing on the radio in that magical era of the late '30's and early 40's with a yearning for youth, or even a pre-

The Editorial in the last issue, referring to the lack of MCA/EMI Bing issues here whereas Japan, Germany, Italy & other countries were doing so with attractive albums was sent with a covering letter to EMI/MCA. TO DATE THERE HAS BEEN NO REPLY.



natal nostalgia, are the details that will trigger your response.

BING & CONNEE "ON THE AIR" Spokane 18 US Mono.

Manhattan	Basin St. Blues
You Ain't Kidding	Ooh! Look at me Now
The Hut-Sut Song	Yes Indeed!
Everything Happens to Me	Easy Street
Number Ten Lullaby Lane	Yes Indeed!
Rose O'Day	Between 18th & 19th on Chestnut St.
The Hut-Sut Song	

Mastering of this LP was done by 'Down Under' specialist, Gordon Wall, with the imaginative colour cover also produced by Gordon and Joyce Wall. There are extensive sleeve notes by feature writer Bob Davenport and Morton B. Miller, the vice-President of Club Crosby (US). Both give considerable praise to the combined talents of the principals (I don't have to say the Connee is Boswell of that ilk) in a collection which brings together all of their radio performances in tandem, and tho' it may fairly be said that none of the featured tracks reaches the musical perfection of the commercially recorded duets, the album revels in free-wheeling anti-convention that properly reflects the jazz-mindedness of the two performers whenever they had the change together.

MUSIC HALL HIGHLIGHTS Spokane 19 US Mono

My Mind's on You	It Was Wonderful Then
Moonlight on the Ganges	You Walked By
The Moon Won't Talk	Say 'si-si'.
Maria Elena	Fools Rush In
Last Night's Gardenias	May I Never Love Again
Yours	Loch Lomond
Play, Fiddle, Play	My Heart tells Me
Goodbye, now.	It Makes no Difference Now.

Again, the production credits go to Gordon and Joyce Wall, only this time with Al Sutton, Editor of BINGANG (US) doing the honours with the write-up. He correctly points out that this is the first 'home-grown' LP of Bing for some time. Not so accurately he says that "only three of these sixteen songs were ever recorded commercially by Bing", when, in fact, four of them were. A minor quibble that in no way detracts from this very listenable 'Kraft' material that has Bing taking us stylishly, though ever so relaxed, through a selection of well-known songs of the time.

DER BINGLE VOL. 3 Spokane 20 US Mono

Side 1: Complete MAIL CALL programme of 1944 featuring Bing, Bette Davis, Barry Fitzgerald, Leo McCarey, William Frawley and Don Wilson. Bing sings: Swinging on a Star; You Belong to my Heart; Too-ra-loo-ra-loo-ral; Ida (with William Frawley)

Side 2: Bless 'em All; Is you is or is you Ain't ma Baby?; The Fifth Marines (The Amphibians Battle Hymn); Sunday, Monday or Always; Riding Herd on a Cloud, The Bombardiers' Song; Coming in on a Wing and a Prayer; Shoo-Shoo Baby.

For those who haven't heard a taping of the Mail Call programme it should be pointed out that this is an 'Oscar' winners occasion with the GOING MY WAY principals getting together with other well-known personalities in very light-weight dialogue, almost a sketch, and a sprinkling of Crosby vocals. Though I doubt that James Van Heusen, who took his name from the shirt manufacturers and has written the sleeve-notes, cares too much for the way that Bing sings his and Johnny Burke's Academy Award winning song in this particular instance.

As what may be an interesting aside, the real name of Jimmy Van Heusen was Edward Chester Babcock. If that rings a bell it is because Harry Turner and Chester Babcock (alias Crosby and Hope) were the gad-about space travellers in ROAD TO HONG-KONG. But, enough of diversion. Essentially a War-time album - hence the title - Side 2 provides a typical selection of War years ditties and stirring patriotism in song that echoed around many a theatre of war as well as way back home. As with all these albums, the sound fidelity is excellent for the period and source, and in many instances must be better than when originally heard through radios turned in from far-flung battle stations.

One of the nicest things about this LP is the sleeve which has a front-cover colour sketch by Joe Sinnott which depicts three of the Oscar winners - Davis, Crosby and Fitzgerald - smilingly clutching their awards alongside an aggrieved-looking Jack Benny, who has nought but bow and fiddle to tuck beneath folded arms in a typical pose;

BING AND THE MUSIC MAIDS	Spokane 21	US Mono
I've Got a Lot of Dreaming to Do	The Little Red Fox	
Honolulu	Confucius Say	
In a Bungalow where red roses Grow	Sunday	
You're the Only Star in my Blue Heaven	Sweet Potato Piper	
Stop! Its Wonderful	I've got my Eyes on You	
El Rancho Grande	The Woodpecker Song	
Scatterbrain	Ma, he's Making eyes at Me	
You're a Lucky Guu	Down by the Ohio	
Looking at the world thro' rose-coloured Glasses.	If I Had my Way	
Holy Smoke! Can't you take a Joke?	Friendly Tavern.	

Very nice, and comprehensive, liner notes from Alice Ludes, a founder-member of the original five-girl group heard on the air with Bing as well as records, set the scene for this easy-on-the-ear selection of 20 songs from a 12-month period (except for one song) from April 1939 to May 1940. A historically dramatic year for Britain - and Europe - with American radio providing a melodic counterpoint to the sound of war a'blowing in our ears. Unpretentious and sometimes silly little ditties that now evoke so much nostalgia. For my liking this one of the four new Spokanes is the best value for money, not just for the number of songs featured but also for musical quality and company. And here I must mention the sterling work of John Scott Trotter and his Orchestra, featured throughout this series. This LP carries high-quality photographs of the Music Maids, including one of Bing with Alice Ludes that reads: 'To Alice. Sincere thanks from Dr. Bing'. A little 'in joke' no doubt on a par with the revelation that Bing called the five lassies 'The Mice'. Nice squeaking, girls!

Of the two 'oddities' mentioned in the first paragraph, one of them concerns the Music for Pleasure version of NEW TRICKS, LAT 8217. When the MFP album was originally released under the title of WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT MEETS THE GOLD OF THE DAY it featured the 1931 version of that song instead of the John Scott Trotter 1945 track - and this title tune was a replacement for ON THE ALAMO which was one of the 12 tracks with Buddy Cole that form the basis of the LP.

Now, under an identical label and sleeve (MFP 50249 - stereo) the record has been reissued with the 1945 version of OLD BLUE replacing the 1931 recording. Thus, for the 'compleat collector' this is a 'must'.

Most will be aware of the Chevron cassette (obtainable only in Woolworths) that I've kindly been sent entitled THE MAGNIFICENT AL JOLSON - CHV 068, a direct equivalent of the LP of the same title - also issued earlier on

the Windmill label (WMD273). This air-shot album includes five tracks of Al duetting with Bing from 1947 Philco Time Radio shows and on the sleeve Bing '(one of the newer boys') gets a couple of lines of mention. The Chevron cassette and liner make no mention, however, of Bing. A rare distinction!

Editor: Glad Bert likes the Music Maids Spokane; some of the songs on it were issued on BOUNCING WITH BING umpteen years ago and remains, in the opinion of many, one of the very best of the 'private' albums. The period covered was indeed halcyon.

MUSIC,MUSIC, MUSIC (see page 26 of previous BING) is, as you will see from TRADING POST now available in a vivid sleeve from LEGEND MUSIC.

And, owing to contradictory reports we regret misleading members over the American Readers Digest 8-LP plus Christmas bonus LP, set. We said a couple of issues back that they were NOT prepared to mail overseas. We have learned from several members this is not the case and it WILL be posted. Details/conditions are: an enquiry from member Ray Torey (among others) produced the following:

RESDERS DIGEST: PLEASANTVILLE, N.Y. 10570, USA.

Delighted to learn of your interest in BING SINGS AGAIN - 31.98 dollars plus 4.11 dollars = 36.09 dollars surface mail.

PAYMENT IN FULL IN US DOLLARS (BY INTERNATIONAL MONEY ORDER OR A DRAFT DRAWN ON A US BANK) MUST ACCOMPANY ALL ORDERS FROM CUSTOMERS LIVING OUTSIDE THE UNITED STATES.....ANY CUSTOM CHARGES WILL BE PAYABLE BY THE RECIPIENT. FOR YOUR CONVENIENCE THE SHIPPING CHARGE BY AIR MAIL (?) IS COST OF PRODUCT, i.e. 31.98 dollars PLUS 12.64 dollars totalling 44.52 dollars.

With, say, 2 dollars to the pound, this represents a very good bargain indeed - the set contains MCA, RCA, EMI and much radio in first-class quality and you actually receive nine LPs. But note the insistence on US currency. Around £22.50 would therefore be the price - airmail postage included! Make sure you ask for BING SINGS AGAIN. At the rates given to Ray Torey and including postage, you get 9 LPs at little more than £2 each.

Still on records, PETER MURRAY, 5/5 Greendykes Drive, Edinburgh writes:

I have a copy of Bing's WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS/A BLUES SERENADE, the 'fluff' version containing the 'language'. It has no number but 'MU.' on both sides. Do you think this is rare - I got in when I was living in the States? There is quite a lot of surface noise as it must have been around for some time.

Well, this has been around on tape for aeons and there was the LP of fluffs, but we've not heard of it on a 78 before. So, it must be rare. Any comments from elsewhere?

Incidentally, reverting back to the READERS DIGEST information given above, it must be said that the possibility of customs duty may become relevant. From experience, its a bit of a lucky dip - but it shouldn't prove too expensive if the worst comes. AND, the Editor would be grateful if record queries could be addressed to our consultants on the subject - see page 5!!

WE'RE DELIGHTED TO LEARN THAT BARRY WHITTINGHAM IS MAKING HEARTENING PROGRESS - BEING SET UP WITH CALIPERS AND ALREADY GETTING AROUND THE WARD IN A WHEELCHAIR....

WELL, DID YOU EVAH !

Since our Editorial was written there have been developments regarding the book THE HOLLOW MAN in that certain sections of our own, highly principled, utterly moral, press have been serialising this scabrous publication. We have stacks of letters bursting with indignation, disgust, horror, etc. etc. But, worry not.

Remember that currently our noble press is making a hero out of a notorious Train Robber, ensuring that he can continue to gallivant around the world, financially secure. That the highest courts in the land have - at last - thrown some light on other 'journalistic' methods. For example, huge cheques to any relative, friend, or mere acquaintance of the equally notorious Yorkshire "Ripper" who will utter a word or two about this criminal. There are literally scores of other instances whereby it pays - and pays well - to be evil, or to be connected in some way with evil.

We've long been aware this is the age of the "anti-hero" - a quaint but telling description. Decency is stale, old-fashioned, and - much more important - UNPROFITABLE! Witness how two of our tabloids are (in THESE days!) actually reducing their prices in a fight-to-the-finish in order that we may have the privilege of reading their garbage.

So, it can be imagined that this wonderful piece of anti-hero was true grist to the mill. Bing, the beloved, the most-respected entertainer the world has ever seen - and a chance (now he's safely dead!) to have a real snipe at him. Lovely stuff....

> Our advice is: don't bother to write indignant letters to them. Truly treat them with the utter contempt they richly merit. Save the cholera....save the blood-pressure. It just isn't worth it.

But, we WILL be disappointed if some of these long-term friends and associates of Bing do not offer some scathing rebuttal. So many enjoyed his friendship (even if he didn't invite them to dinner every night!) and his largesse (even if Bing insisted on no publicity); they have some responsibility, it might be thought, in condemning these scurrilous 'revelations'.

Be that as it may. We've often noticed, when preparing BING, that one of Bing's songtitles makes a very, very apt heading. There is certainly one for thi

> Can't you just imagine Bing reading this book, looking up, and in that delightful throwaway style of his say:
>
> WELL! DID YOU EVAH !

IF BING HAD RETIRED —

There is, of course, no fixed age for retirement for artists. One has only to consider the actors &c. who are still performing at the age of 70 and 80 plus - Stanley Holloway, Sandy Powell, Cavan O'Connor - while on the other side of the Atlantic one is constantly being astonished at seeing actors/actresses who were appearing in the 30's. Some do retire, of course, when alas, the public would seem no longer to want them....but all the while they ARE wanted, artists seem to go on..... Bing was certainly a case in point - there is obviously something in an artist's make-up that makes them react. The something, no doubt, that made them take up the profession in the first place. Bing observed that if he were to retire it would immediately throw a lot of people out of work (his death has proved this to be so); and when Ken Barnes suggested an album title of BING IS BACK, Bing strongly objected: That suggests I've been away - and I never have! Yet, undeniably, there were doldrum periods when it seemed that, whether officially or not, he was virtually retiring. Here JOHN BIGNELL mulls over some of those times.....

At the time of the passing of the great John Scott Trotter I penned a brief tribute to him in these pages (was it really all of six years ago?) and suggested then that if by some mischance Bing had retired in 1936 and had thus missed on his legendary seventeen-year recording association with JST he had, nevertheless, still contributed enough to the world of popular singing to rank among the all-time 'greats'. Although the possibility of retirement was never a practical proposition (tho' one or two papers did say he was to concentrate on acting rather than singing) it did get me thinking about those times in the 'Forties, 'Fifties and 'Sixties when it did seem feasible that Bing might be saying 'Farewell' to his singing career.

Let us look at 1945. Bing had received the ultimate accolade from Hollywood - an Oscar. He had, during the years 1940-45 risen from being merely the greatest singer of popular songs of the century to the dizzy heights of becoming a legend in his own lifetime. It is a point made to me many times by Pat Forster whose knowledge of the period is unshakeably sound, and one which has recently been endorsed by another friend, Al Longworth, that during the War years Bing was a National Institution. Historians so far seem to have under-emphasized the importance of Bing's status during those historic years. Anyone born after 1945, relying on historical notes and articles could be excused for thinking that Bing took a not-too-prominent place alongside Glenn Miller and Vera Lynn in the entertainment firmament. Yet the truth was that Bing simply dominated in those years. The BBC stated that two-thirds of all requests for records were for those by Bing; Winston Churchill ordered the BBC to play 15-minutes of Bing every morning as a morale booster.

By 1945, therefore, it might be said there was not a lot more Bing could do to add to his stature as a world entertainer. With hindsight, we know he could have been more stretched as an actor; generally speaking his films do him much less justice than the other media he

he conquered - with notable exceptions, of course. Added to all this is the unmistakeable evidence that the voice was, on occasion, sounding tired and strained. So I suggest 1945 as the first year in which Bing could conceivably have retired as a singer.

However, with the ending of the Kraft Music Hall contract (what a momentous ten-year stint that was!) we were soon in no doubt as to the future plans with the beginning of Philco Radio Time and a continuation of the happy-go-lucky film career throughout the rest of the decade, in addition to above average activity in the recording studios in 1946-7 and 1949; there was an enforced pause in 1948 due to the musicians' strike.

Moving ahead to 1954 there were several factors which might legitimately indicate a dignified exit from the recording scene. Bing's regular radio shows, Philco followed by Chesterfield followed by General Electric were ended. The marathon twenty-year recording contract with Decca was also over; Dixie Lee had died and Bing had shown little or no interest in the giant of television that was rapidly making radio close to something obsolete. Musical tastes, too, were slowly but surely changing under 'rebellious' - and permissive! - youth and those eager to profit by it, with numerous 'gimmicky' singers coming on the scene. And Haley, Presley and Rock were on the threshold.

> In addition to all this Bing, now past his 50th birthday, had during the summer of 1954 recorded the epic Autobiography set of records, embracing about a hundred of his more enduring songs, linked by a dialogue which could easily be mistaken for the reminiscences of a man about to retire to rest quietly on his larels. But as that year turned into 1955, followed by the extravagant and so successful film HIGH SOCIETY in 1956, albums with Buddy Cole and Bob Scobey in 1957, not to mention a second wedding the same year, memorable albums with Rosemary Clooney in 1958 and '59 before we could realise it fully a new decade had arrived - and Bing was still very much a part of it.

And it was probably around this time - the early 60's - that Bing so naturally, perhaps inevitably, took over quite simply as the 'elder statesman' of the popular singing world. Although he was quite determined to devote a large proportion of his time to his second family Bing was still finding time to continue filming (over here in '61); to produce beautiful albums like BING IN EUROPE, RETURN TO PARADISE ISLANDS, and to show the Country & Western crowd how it could be done if you were blessed with the Crosby genius with THE GREAT COUNTRY HITS.

So, we arrive at 1964 - another year when it could, I believe, so easily have been the big finale. I have always considered that ROBIN & THE SEVEN HOODS was not really a musical 'spoof' to demonstrate the talents of Sinatra, Martin, Davis & co. although that was undoubtedly how it started out. The fortuitous inclusion of Bing in the 'guest' role of Alan A'Dale seemed to change the complexion of the film completely. It did for me, anyway! Not only did Bing steal every scene in which he appeared, I had the irresistible feeling that the rest of the cast played their parts as a tribute to Bing in what could conceivably have been his final performance before retiring. This feeling could only be strengthened when, subsequently, Bing went through 1965-1969 with the barest minimum of recording - almost missing out entirely in the last year of the decade and saved by the timely issue of GOLDILOCKS on LP from the TV show. And when

1970 and 1971 proved to be equally unfruitful with just a handful of Christmas songs recorded in each year it did look, once again, as though Bing was gently winding up his career with just the odd TV show and appearance - the film career, it might be said, ended in 1966 with Bing's part in the ill-fated remake of the classic STAGECOACH.

A lively session with Count Basie in the spring of 1972 resulted in another LP, followed by an appearance on Parkinson TV gave rise to some speculation about the future - and not very optimistic speculation when we saw how drawn Bing looked on television. With the exception of a couple of tracks with Billy Byers in June, 1973 was practically a blank year. The launching of the unique 14-part series on BBC Radio during the spring of that year and the news at the year's end that Bing was to go into hospital for 'exploratory tests' did seem to mark what we thought was to be the end of the Bing Crosby saga as far as recordings were concerned. This feeling was reinforced early in 1974 with the news of the operation for the removal of two-fifths of one lung, followed by lengthy convalescence.

The short recording session in October of that year, organised by United Artists Records did not seem all that significant and we were completely unprepared for the momentous happenings of 1975, '76 and '77 But the story of those years, plus what might have been, must be the subject of another story, another time.

Editor: Very nice round-up, too! But it might be pointed out that Bing was a 'national institution' here long before the War - then he merely played his natural part as the world's No. 1 popular singer. In fact, it is probably true to say that Bing became a legendary figure very shortly after 1932. I clearly recall that the name was on everyone's lips in 1932 - and I was still at school then! I don't think any film has been awaited with so much impatience as THE BIG BROADCAST of that year. We already had PLEASE, HERE LIES LOVE, DINAH etc., and then came so quickly JUST A GIGOLO, HOME ON THE RANGE, TEMPTATION, WRAP YOUR TROUBLES IN DREAMS and then in fantastic succession songs such as LOVE IN BLOOM, JUNE IN JANUARY FIVE-TEN-CENT STORE etc. etc. etc. Amateur talent competitions were very popular in those days in both cinemas and clubs - but they changed the name to Bing Crosby Competitions - all the contestants wanted to sing like Bing! People were buying Bing records - and asking about the newer ones - BEFORE they had a gramophone - to play on a friends! And most important of all, Bing 'hit' with all sections of the populace - not youngsters only. Old and young all developed a love and feeling for "Bing" - the Crosby has never been necessary. All the semi-pro bands in local halls worked hard to get a 'mike' so that THEIR Bing could perform....a wonderful time. And, it lasted!

Time after time throughout the 30's the papers/magazines carried stories: BING IS COMING! But, he never did and it was plain that his broadcasting, film, record commitments (apart from public appearances in the States) precluded any departure from America. Remember how delighted Bing was when WAIKIKI WEDDING allowed him to get away, if only to Hawaii - which made a big impact on him. It was indeed the War - 1944 finally - that at last brought Bing here...and you read in a recent BING just how <u>that</u> visit was received.

And the times when it looked as if Bing might indeed abandon records has been discussed many times, both here and in other magazines. The general ppinion is that Bing sadly missed Jack Kapp when he died; he

seemed rudderless, for it is known that he relied totally on that perspicacious man. It became quite conspicuous that, mainly, he wasn't getting the songs or the accompaniments that Perry Como, or Frank Sinatra, were getting. Sonny Burke 'had a go' but was not impressive. Buddy Cole's efforts, though released on some albums, were mainly for brief radio spots.

Happily, as has often been made clear, BING LOVED TO SING - so there was really no question of him ever forsaking his favourite pursuit. I know it was with absolute dismay that I found Bing singing less and less in his films - until he reached the nadir: not a note in the aforementioned STAGECOACH. But his film chances obviously got slimmer when he could no longer get the girl - by charm or chicanery!

But John's article has led to so many things - if he will forgive me, he shouldn't write such evocative articles! - and one of those things is virtually a testament of faith, not unconnected with what Fred Reynolds was saying about 'fan' clubs &c. in the previous issue. I got the Bing magic so long ago - and it has never waned, which explains why when I'm old enough to know better, I spend most of my time on Crosbyana! I have admired a lot of artists over the years but there is not another one I would even remotely consider editing and producing a magazine for, answering hundreds of letters/queries, and so on. Bing was, and is, completely unique.

JOHNNY JONES in Ballyhalbert, Newtownards in Northern Ireland must be wondering what has happened! After being the surprised subject of John Marshall's song, THE BALLAD OF JOHNNY JONES, he recently found himself the subject also of a splendid, very prominent, full half-page story in Ulster's only Sunday paper - SUNDAY NEWS (May 3, 1981, appropriately enough) - complete with a picture of Johnny himself surrounded 'with some of the mementoes of the singer at his Ballyhalbert home' as well as a picture (most surprisingly so early) of the statue that was unveiled all that distance away in Spokane on that very same day!

The story is exceedingly well-written and is entitled:

WHY CROSBY'S MAGIC WILL NEVER DIE

We received it, alas, too late to fully reproduce - that will come later Here, however, is an extract or two:

'Johnny, a Welshman who has lived in Northern Ireland since 1960 is a member of several Crosby clubs...and all the members keep in regular touch. "We're all dedicated to the memory of Bing," says Johnny, who keeps in contact with a host of friends around the world by tape, "and we all help one another with our collections.....But Johnny has one little extra, a song dedicated to himself on a record currently proving popular with club members...John Marshall of Teddington and I worked together on Bing material and out of the blue he sent me this record in thanks for the material I had supplied. To my surprise one of the songs was THE BALLAD OF JOHNNY JONES....the thing about a Crosby song was that you could sing it yourself afterwards..it is simple, but it was always good." It was a sad truth contained in the last song of his last album: "There are so many songs in me that won't be sung...."

The article also included the names of many of our Northern Ireland members - a generous tribute.

LETTERS

...are always welcome. News, views, suggestions, memories - and as you will see, criticism is far from outlawed! And we know that members' letters are a looked-for feature in BING. Also,as if to reassure FRED REYNOLDS concerning the possible odium attaching to 'fan' clubs we start with a broadside.....

STAN PHILLIPS, 45 Russell Mount, Brank-some Wood Rd., Bournemouth:

"The writings on Bing's voice (and its phases - John Bignell et seq) got very boring and must surely be the worst trivia printed in such an excellent magazine. Who CARES what key he sang in; he just got better and better. No more of this rubbish please. I know as Editor you have to print criticisms but let's dispense with the 'high-brow' knockers. I'm sure most of the members would agree with me. Bing was the great-est no matter what key or what year!

Editor: Phew! Take that, you 'high-brows'; the fact remains tho' that a lot of members DO like analysing Bing's phases and possible changes - so perhaps Stan will indulge us now and then! And in view of his concluding sentence, perhaps he hasn't dis-proved the 'fan' syndrome! I know how he feels.....

JOHN FLEMING, 8 Caernarvon Way, Banbury, Oxon: I read Bing's 'no loner' article in the previous issue - certainly Bing never needed anything like a bodyguard or other hangers-on. I bet he never had a threatening letter or an acrimonious remark in his life. When my wife and I were allowed inside the Shepperton Studios in 1961 we weren't searched, asked no questions - no formality of any kind. Bing's valet remarked, in passing, that he was the least trouble, totally undemand-ing. 'I have more trouble with the "small fish" who have egoes way above their minimal talent. Bing is the complete tentleman.'

And this we found out when Bing came to us - carefully noting that my wife was seated before he himself sat down, greeting us as if WE were the people who counted! I make no apology for saying that I still thrill to this wonderful meeting my wife and I had with Bing.

I've often wondered if we have any blind members?

REG BRISTO,
7 Greenmeadow Close,
CWMBRAN,
GWENT, NP44 4PJ

Editor: That was Bing! Regarding John's final query I cannot imagine what prompted it but the answer is yes, at least one. And, you may be astounded to hear, we have another member who actually tapes the entire contents of BING so that the aff-licted member can thoroughly enjoy the magazine in an entirely personal way. And, until joining ICC, neither knew each other. If that isn't a heart-warming story of some magnitude - whst is?

We also have members who have become known for - voluntarily - looking after sick and injured birds and get brought them from near and far....at least one who is reading the Russian language and goes on cylcing tours in the middle of winter....football referees, cricket umpires, gentlemen of the cloth (many denominations), civil servants, long-distance lorry drivers..professional entertainers.... less fortunates who are in wheel-chairs, or have had the painful blessing of hip-replacements, have artificial limbs...in fact, the whole gamut of a cross-section of our population, it would seem.... a nurseryman or two, shopkeepers including at least one supermarket proprietor, newspaper writers, a number of doctors, and one who must be a little on his own - he organises foreign tours for British football teams! We even had a couple from the chorus of the Royal Opera house, Covent Garden tho' they seem to have fallen by the wayside...and certainly we have some of the most important members of the community - housewives! We could go on, but you get the idea - for they all have one thing in common at least: Bing Crosby.

Please read GENTLEMAN instead of the misprint on the previous page...

We were shocked to get an understandably distraught letter from the mother of our member, BARRY WHITTINGHAM, who has met with a horrendous accident. Barry fell through an asbestos roof when the plank on which he was working broke. He has sustained all kinds of serious fractures. Recovering from the severe shock we understand Barry is, after a very depressed spell, beginning to come to terms though we are profoundly upset to hear that he may not walk again. Barry is in Ward C of the Queen's Medical Centre, Nottingham should anyone feel disposed to drop him a line of cheer. As your Editor knows from recent experience, it is an encouraging sign when a cassette player is asked for - and it seems Barry, tho' in all kinds of plaster and traction, is listening to Bing again. It goes without saying, though we'll say it: GOOD LUCK BARRY. WE ALL WISH YOU WELL.

DEREK PARKES, 66 Firs Rd., Winterslow, Salisbury, Wilts: I recently learned from what should be an entirely reliable source of an alternative master of Bing and the Mills Brothers singing DINAH - and it is very different from the "A" master with which we are familiar. More than that, there is a real possibility it will be issued.

Forgive me if I go out on a limb but I seem to remember something in BING about AA and A masters, e.g. DLA931A or DLA931AA. Because of studio expense plus cost of artists &c. recording companies couldn't afford to have technical failures due to faulty equipment so more than one disc-recorder was invariably used. I have recently read an article wherein it was mentioned that Muzak Association simultaneously used up to four machines on Fats Waller material. Decca mostly used two machines and the resultant recordings were differentiated by appending -A, -AA, or -B, -BB etc. A and AA, therefore, are recordings of ONE performance made simultaneously on two disc-recorders. The quality may, of course, vary if there was a small difference in the machines but the material is identical

Editor: A substantially different DINAH will be something. I know the name of the man who claims this new master and as Derek says, it should be 100 per cent reliable tho' we will refrain from naming him at this juncture. The rest of Derek's letter will be of interest to discographers. But what of HIS PS?

I also had a fall recently when climbing into the loft. A timber came away - someone had forgotten to nail it. But I was lucky for I landed on a 4" wide joist. Had it not been there I would have fallen into the hall. As it was I had a short spell in hospital - I thought I'd hurt my spine as I landed on the small of my back and balanced across the beam!

Editor: The things they get up to - and I'm a fine one to talk! But it does rather sound like an Olympic event. Trust Derek is fully recovered.

SID SCOTT, 28 St. Domingo Grove, Liverpool: I think I have read the latest BING three times, and I read and re-read all the past issues that I have. Its a kind of mental 'softener' - I always feel better for it. More relaxed. I'll bet this is one side of Crosbyana, or facet of it, that hasn't been looked into.

Editor: Hmm...fair enough. Everyone gets what they want - but if anyone falls asleep reading BING please, please let us know immediately! But, once again, we know what Sid means. Incidentally, in mentioning the various members we have a page or two back we might have mentioned the member who claims he reads one page a day - to ration it out and make it last longer. Then finally he reads it again in one sitting. That way he finds the gap between issues much less tedious!

ROY OUGH, 29 Shaftesbury Cottages, North Hill, Plymouth: I sincerely hope you (Editor) are making a complete recovery from your serious fracture. The stark truth is that the injured member is never the same as it was before - as I well know from a painful experience. Poor Bing suffered badly with that dreadful fall in Pasadena. It really did harm his health and particularly because at his age the resilience and recuperative ability of the body is greatly lessened by the advancing years.

A close study of Bing's face and expression before and after the stage fall via photographs demonstrate most graphically what he had gone through.

Bing's exemplary character gives us all encouragement to 'hang in there' and to keep pitching (to use one of his American expressions) in the face of adversity. Bing didn't 'just roll up hill to success'. He climbed painstakingly every inch of the way, and expert that he was, MADE IT LOOK EASY!

Editor: Roy has suffered personally and knows what he is talking about. It was brother Bob Crosby who made the telling remark about rolling uphill - seems he had the Crosby turn of phrase. But Bob's remark was a sarcastic rebuttal of those who said Bing had it easy: I mean, who can easily roll UPHILL?
And I have, like Roy, studied pictures of Bing before and after that fall, and one picture in particular is a shocker - the one of Bing leaving hospital on the arm of Kathryn and looking as frail as a feather in the breeze.

Which makes the final two years all that more remarkable...

JOHN TASKER, 16 Granville Rd., Timperley, Ches.: What do you think of that dreadful photo on the cover of COME RAIN OR COME SHINE?

Editor: The same as you John - quite appalling. A most uncharacteristic, off-guard, picture of Bing that gives nothing at all to the album. And, alas, we can go further. ALL the United Artists albums - with the possible and grudging exception of the Bing-Fred Astaire album - were benighted with truly inappropriate front-cover sleeves. Its a shame and a little mysterious for quite a bit of cash was expended on the sleeves, yet we would say they were more likely to DETER sales rather than promote them. For us it wasn't too important - but disappointing. On one Bing is perched, most uncomfortably it would seem, on the stool before a very old harmonium (THAT'S WHAT LIFE IS ALL ABOUT); on AT MY TIME OF LIFE Bing looks just as uncomfortable with his seat and his clothes, rather like an old allotment-holder taking a rest; that on COME SHARE THE WINE is a specially-commissioned portrait but, alas, not a very good one - with the eyes a ridiculous colour. The picture on BEAUTIFUL MEMORIES is on a par with the one John Tasker mentions. And let it also be said, Polydor didn't do much better with SEASONS - that is a picture bordering on the surrealistic.
We can only repeat our opinion: none of t[illegible]ctures were characteristic of Bing Crosby - and United Artists could certainly learn a lot from Decca in album presentation. When one considers the, literally, thousands of pictures there are of Bing - REALLY Bing - it was a great shame. There, now we've said it!

ALF PEYTON, 14 St. Georges Drive, Carpenders Park, Watford, Herts: Since you inserted my note re. members who may be cyclists I have received three letters...and from one of them there was an astonishing chain of coincidence. This was Peter Howard, recently moved to Llandrindod Wells from Yorkshire. It turned out that Peter and I are virtually the same age, we were called up for the Forces and then demobbed at the same time; we were married the same year, two of our children are the same age - and to cap it all, Peter used to go out cycling with a retired chap was was actually a founder member of my cycling club - the Willesden CC!

Editor: One thing leads to another in BING!

BRIAN FORD, 9 St. Margarets Rd., East Twickenham, Midd'x: Have you noticed that on CLEMENTINE Bing sings the first words the wrong way round? 'In a canyon in a cavern' is an impossibility!

Editor: Yes indeed - as Bing said to Connee. But, one could never be sure if Bing had accidentally fluffed a lyric - or whether he was exercising his humour. There are songs where he sings 'posolutely and absotively', and in another refers to 'curly teeth and pearly hair'.....can't precisely recall the songs as we write. Liable to get tongue-in-cheek, was Bing!

TREVOR WAGSTAFF, 49 Dawes Avenue, Hornchurch, Essex: I'm dropping a line to say, primarily, how impressed I was with the John Marshall EP record, THE LEGEND OF BING. I have played it several times and it sounds better at each playing. John does a difficult job very well in telling Bing's career in one song - the title song. And I'd be most surprised if Johnny Jones of Northern Ireland isn't

tickled pink with THE BALLAD OF JOHNNY JONES; and John Marshall sounds a little like Johnny Mercer in THEY'RE NOT MAKING CHRISTMAS LIKE THEY USED TO - and that can't be bad. The CIRCLE song leaves you with a sort of 'privileged' feeling. I recommend this inexpensive record to all members (if they haven't already got it!). As far as I'm concerned, John can make some more...

> Editor: Trevor sums up what seems to be the universal appreciation of John Marshall's one-man-band effort (tho' he did have some accompaniment) with his extended-play record of the four songs he wrote, sang, and played on. In fact, we have had scores of letters on the same lines - and can only say that anyone who did NOT approve has not bothered to write (And see KEEPING TRACK - Bert Bishop) in the previous issue of BING
> If you haven't yet got THE LEGEND OF BING, you can rectify the omission by sending £1.50 plus 25p P & P to:
>
> JOHN MARSHALL,
> 39 KINGS RD.,
> TEDDINGTON,
> MIDD'X.
>
> for a copy. Overseas members should make the necessary upward adjustment for airmail delivery.

DOUG. HAYWOOD, 14 Weaverthorpe Rd., Woodthorpe, Nottingham: I was about eight when I first heard Bing; at that time my elder brother was a very keen fan of Bing's. We would have quite lengthy sessions of Bing's record - and it became a family affair, too. I was 13 when I started buying records on my own account. I bought th 78s steadily and then came the time when these were supplemented by LP's. Indeed, I found myself listening only to the LPs and putting the 78s safely away. Then in the later 60's another brother, who travels the country, called one day and said that a man he had met (a cafe owner) was a member of a Bing Crosby club and was searching for old 78s. Well, in a way he twisted my arm over the matter and the upshot was I parted with these now priceless 78s. I consoled myself at the time that soon all of them would be reissued on 78s anyway....how wrong I was. I am one one of those who likes the sound of the 78s, when the orchestra and singer were balanced and in harmony with each other, not competing with each other as they do on modern recordings. It seems sad to me but I must say it: if only these 1970's recordings had that same appealing sound of the old 78s...no amount of fiddling with the balance and tone controls can correct the balance of singer/orchestra. I usually end up hating what is possibly a good backing!

> Editor: Once again, a writer summing up what many other members feel. We have remarked, of course, on the needless complications that modern multi-track recording proliferate in the way of mixing, balance, etc. etc. And we must confess it did seem at one time that ALL Bing's 78s would eventually re-emerge on LP. Have any of our discogrhy/researchers worked out just how many 78s have or have NOT appeared on LP? A tremendous task. And the way the companies are shaping we seem unlikely to get the balance of those precious 78s on micro-groove.

R.A.Morris, 35 St. Ives Grove, Leeds: Concerning great songs that Bing might have sung but didn't, my contribution is SOPHISTICATED LADY, which I consider would have been an all-time great for Bing, especially with Duke Ellington's Orchestra. Another thing I've often wondered: did Bing ever do a radio show with Fats Waller? If not,

he was about the only top-line star Bing never appeared with.

Editor: We have no record, or knowledge, of Fats Waller with Bing....Fats was a wonderful character and a 'duet' between he and Bing would have been something! While admittedly the list of guests on Bing's shows was long and highly distinguished, we feel certain that there must have been a lot of stars who did NOT appear with him. Stands to reason. The Ink Spots readily come to mind - tho' as in the case of Doris Day, recently under discussion in BING, the coloured quartet did appear in a Jack Benny Show which also featured Bing - but, they did not appear together and had no connection. Doris Day appeared on a Bob Hope show when Bing was a guest but here again, their respective parts seem to have been recorded quite separately.

MEMBERS WILL APPRECIATE THAT MAIL IS VOLUMINOUS - AND QUITE OFTEN IT IS SOMETHING AKIN TO A LUCKY-DIP FOR THOSE THAT ARE PUBLISHED. IT IS NO REFLECTION WHATSOEVER ON THE WRITERS OF HIGHLY INTERESTING LETTERS THAT THEY DO NOT APPEAR HERE, LARGELY BECAUSE OF QUESTIONS OF SPACE THAT CAN BE ALLOTTED. THEY ARE WARMLY THANKED, NEVERTHELESS.

LES BRICE, 5 Rush Green Gardens, Romford, Essex, RM7 OLR: Fred Reynolds's article was first-classand I doubt if other magazines have so many erudite contributors as ours. Let's hope you can get Fred to write more often. Back in the days of the CROSBY COLLECTOR he was always in the midst of things. With Fred, Bert Bishop, Les Gaylor you Reg and so many others we are fortunate indeed.

I'm glad Colin Pugh's ALTERNATE TAKES has done well and couldn't the idea I broached some time ago be adopted? That is, the issue of a cassette (or cassettes) of all the alternate takes analysed? I'm sure all those who have the ABC would be interested and its about the only way we are ever going to get a copy of some of the takes.

Editor: The first part of Les's letter had me thinking: He's full of heart. The second part - he has NO heart at all! Let's see, Colin Pugh dealt with 209 titles; with only 2 takes shall we say that means 418 tracks. That in turn, at 30 to a C90 even, would mean no less than FOURTEEN C90's! It could be edited perhaps to illustrate the changes only - but who could possibly undertake that tedium? And who HAS them all, anyway? Not really a proposition Les, is it!

But here again, Les said what many said about Fred Reynolds's literary and amusing article in the previous issue about 30 years of organised Crosbyana. Fred rations his contributions out - but he knows our columns are ever-open for him. And Les Brice's mention of Bert, Leslie and our other contributors is timely and appreciated - and we break our rule about "self-congratulatory" remarks on the quality of the contents of BING, but this should in no way deter others who feel like making a literary contribution - it will be appreciated and used if and when appropriate. Remember, a good idea even though indifferently phrased, can usually be "edited-up" to make a readable story. So - don't be put off because of our experts!

CORRESPONDENTS DESIRING A PERSONAL REPLY, PERHAPS TO A QUERY, SHOULD ENCLOSE A STAMP OR SAE. POSTAGE IS A HEAVY ITEM OF EXPENDITURE THESE DAYS AND THE COURTESY WOULD BE APPRECIATED.

TRADING POST

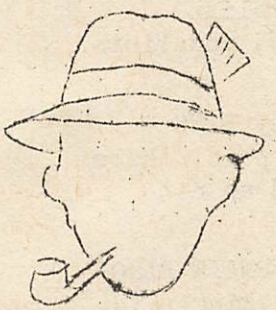
* * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * * *
* * * * * * * *

Here members may advertise their wants & disposals in the way of Crosbyana - records, films, books, pictures, tapes etc. etc. There is no charge but a nominal £1 fee is payable for non-Crosby advertisements. And it is helpful and goes a long way to ensure insertion if requirements are written on a separate sheet of paper:

HARRY C. ROSS, 58 Braishfield Rd., Westleigh, Portsmouth would like to obttain tapes of Bing-film soundtracks (not video-vision).

C. WILKINSON, 8 Old Coach Lane, Belfast BT9, N. Ireland would like to buy new copies of Star Gold 2-LP Set - German; The Many Faces of Bing Crosby...Italy; A Tribute to Bing Crosby - Bing Buddy Cole...America.

"BING" TIES



Can be obtained in navy blue or maroon (wearable with virtually any colour suit) from:

THE BADGE CENTRE,
45 Ropergate,
Pontefract,
West Yorks.

They have the motif seen above (tho' smaller) and cost £1.80p plus 20p post & packing.

Mr. Des Hartrey, 159 Farmilo Rd., Leyton, London, E17 has 4 LPs of Rare Big Band Gems 1932-1947 - Goodman, Shaw, James and contemporaries; unplayed, sealed, unavailable in Britain. All offers considered.

Mr. Bill Drewell, 13 Welton Rd., Daventry, Northants NN11 5PP wants: BING'S HOLLYWOOD No. 15 and 'Shillelaghs' - has for exchange 'Where the Blue of the Night (Biograph) and 'Bing Goes Latin' MGM2354-028

Mr. Les Singleton, 361 Bushbury Lane, Bushbury, Wolverhampton, WV10 9UW wants recordings by Joe Barry, Adam Faith, Eden Kane, Billy Fury, Eartha Kitt, Antony Newley, Stringalongs... to repay a great Bing-kindness by a youngster - if you can help, contact Les).

Mr. Geo. Hughes, 12 Craigleith, Fishcross, By Alloa, Clackmannanshire is emigrating and wants to dispose of his Crosby collection; LPs include HIGH TOR, BING'S HOLLYWOOD 1-15, many Ace of Hearts, several 10" LPs, etc. etc. incl. the 3-LP TOM SAWYER....as well as magazines CROSBY COLLECTOR (50 copies 1967-71) plus EP's and 78s....

ANYONE STILL WITHOUT "THE CROSBY YEARS" by Ken Barnes can obtain it from the Secretary (Reg Bristo) £10.00 post paid.

Mr. Ted Burnell, 7 Collinstown, Clara, C . Offaly, Eire has several items of Crosbyana for offer: Autographed 78 LOUISE/SO THE BLUEBIRDS by Bing, Barris, Rinker: FILMS IN REVIEW June/July 1968 with big Crosby interest: Huge folder of Bing clippings & photos, THE CROSBY COLLECTOR Nos. 54-67: Sheet music, various "tributes" - write for further details and your offers.

IT IS NECESSARY TO REMIND MEMBERS THAT ADVERTISEMENTS SHOULD BE KEPT AS BRIEF AS POSSIBLE, CERTAINLY TO WITHIN 6 LINES. LETTERS SHOULD BE INVITED FOR LISTS WHEN THERE ARE MANY ITEMS INVOLVED. NO ONE WANTS TO TURN "BING" INTO 50-odd PAGES OF ADVTS!

Mr. Jim Lowe, 13 Silverland St., North Woolwich, London, E16 2JZ has a number of 78s for swaps or sale: LPS WHERE THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT (BIOGRAPH), CROSBY CLASSICS (P13397), BIG BROADCAST OF 1935 (Bing sings ON TREASURE ISLAND on this LP, and it includes SCHNOZZLE, JOLSON, VALLEE &c. (LPs for swap only). Requires: HOW THE WEST WAS WON, BING'S HOLLYWOOD NO. 2, HIGH TOR - send SAE for list of 78s.

Mr. Tim Morgureth, 1906 Codd Ave., Balt., MD 21222, USA wants any Bing 78s, MUSICAL AUTOBIOGRAPHY, Southern Memoir, Bing 'n' BAsie, Come Rain Come Shine - these LPs are virtually impossible to get in America. I can pay OR reciprocate - have most US LPs in print incl. READERS DIGEST issues. All letters answered.

Mr. Ken Edge, 487 Hilton Lane, Worsley, Manchester M28 5TE (phone 061-790-5210) requires LAT 8334 DRIFTING & DREAMING, BING 5 (The Road Begins). 78's Lili Marlene, Deep Purple, Red Sails in the Sunset, The Waltz You Saved for Me.

Mr. Jack Souther, 2011 44th Ave. San Francisco, Cal. 94116, USA WANTS: Out-of-print foreign issues - Bing LPs, EP's, singles, commercial cassettes and reel to reel tapes. Will buy or trade for current or out-of-print USA issues. Also English/Australian issues on LPs and 78's of 1930's nostalgia, dance bands, vocalists & personalities. Will buy or trade accordingly.

Although our mini-discography has now been superseded by BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD, a few copies remain at £1.50 post paid; these are useful for marking-off items held or wanted &c. and so not disfiguring JUST FOR THE RECORD.

Both PHILCO RADIO TIMES (Lionel Pairpoint) and THE ALTERNATE BING CROSBY (Colin Pugh) remain available at £2.50 post & packing paid. And both have been enthusiastically received as remarkable efforts of research and very worthy additions to Crosbyana. From the Secretary, Reg Bristo. PHILCO RADIO TIMES lists in great detail, and with entertaining notes, 108 Philco Radio Shows; Colin Pugh has also carried out a diligent analysis of the varying 'takes' issued of Bing records in THE ALTERNATE BING CROSBY.

Member :PAUL MORRISON tells us that Derann Film Services Ltd., 99 High St., Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 1QP have THE ROAD TO BALI (6 reels, colour, Super 8) at the reduced price of £54.95 post paid. Normal price is £79.95. (One gets the impression that the film market is taking a severe walloping from the video-cassette developments, but it is known that many members possess sound-projectors. - Editor)

Miss Wendy Poore hopes to visit the States with her family soon,

though she hasn't told us which State. Meanwhile, however, Wendy, who lives at 43 Dale Valley Rd., Oakdale, Poole, Dorset would much appreciate an American pen-friend.

CHAS. CULLEY, 'Four Seas', Barrow Rd., Denbarn, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk IP29 5EQ has the book THE ONE AND ONLY BING (Bob Thomas) - a duplicated present - a tape of BEAUTIFUL MEMORIES now duplicated on LP; the WHITE CHRISTMAS LP - wants CALL ME LUCKY, CHRISTMAS ROUND THE WORLD, BING 'N' BASIE LP - on exchange basis

EDITOR HAS "LOVE SONGS BY RUSS COLUMBO" RCA VICTOR LSA3066 £3.50 post paid; two of SEASONS (Bing) £3.50 post paid; two copies of the Bing FAVOURITE MELODIES (Windmill) £1.50 each post paid. And as noted elsewhere: THE CROSBY YEARS (Ken Barnes) £10.00 post paid.

LEGEND (MUSIC) Legend House, 153 Francklyn Gardens, Edgware, MIDD'X is one source where an effort is made to obtain the LPs issued but not freely available in record shops. Currently available are:

MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC (see KEEPING TRACK) 16 tracks incl. COPPER CANYON, WEDDING SAMBA, MARTA, ENJOY YOURSELF (with Bob Crosby), YES SIR THAT'S MY BABY, HEART & SOUL, TILL I WALTZ AGAIN WITH YOU, EVERYBODY LOVES ME BABY, I'LL WALK ALONE etc. etc. £5.25 plus P & P (Note: P & P on all LPS is 75p for one, £1.10 for two; 30p for each added LP)

Amalgamated D6001: BING CROSBY BROADCAST - songs never recorded - £4.50
Koala 14129: Swing with Bing (reduced price) £3.50
Koala 14207: You Keep Coming Back Like a Song (reduced) £3.50.

SPOKANE albums available in June: BING & CONNIE / MORE MUSICAL HIGHLIGHTS / DER BINGLE VOL III / BING & THE MUSIC MAIDS) £5.75

MCA 9521/22 SWEET MEMORIES OF BING - available end-June, 2 LP set (Japan) very limited issue; send small deposit to reserve copy £15.50 (Post paid)

BING'S MAGIC (see previous BING) - only £3.00 when ordered with two additional LPs.

MANY OTHER 'DIFFICULT TO GET' LPS AND SOUNDTRACKS ON LP : SEND SAE FOR LISTS TO LEGEND (MUSIC) address above. (Phone 01-958-4326)

JOHN BASSETT, 'Bingville' 15 Oast Way, Rochford, Essex holds regular Bing social-evenings at his home; members convenient to the area should send SAE to John for details of next meeting &c.

PHIL CLARKE, 69 Walden Rd., Stamshaw, Portsmouth organises the Southern Bing Crosby Society - and is now specialising in video-cassette recordings. Send SAW to Phil for information, dates of meetings, etc. etc. Phil, on learning that the BBC was going to produce its own video-cassettes in the same way as it produces LP records, has said it would be interested in Crosby videos IF sufficient are interested. Video-recorder owners should get in touch with Phil - always enclose SAE.

G.R.T. (TOM) EVANS, with several colleagues, organises social events for Midlands members: Tom is at 84 Brereton Rd., New Invention, Willenhall, Staffs, WV12 5LR

JONATHAN RUSSELL, 10 Roxburgh Rd., Westgate-on-Sea, Kent CT8 8RX offers the 108 Philco shows on 54 cassettes at £2.00 per cassette.

LES STREET, 8 Wyfan Place, Mynachdy, Cardiff, S. Glam requires early Nos. of BING please.

REMEMBER!!! Sept. 27th - SEPTEMBER 27th!! is the Leeds dinner-date!

BRIEFLY / LESLIE GAYLOR (pictured below)

I hate to miss my usual appearance in BING, and it may sound unusual in these days of high unemployment, but the truth is I find myself working seven days a week. This is not a permanent situation, of course, but with others I am engaged on a 'test' project on the success of which hangs several thousand jobs. So, I've had very little time indeed to prepare my usual 'column' and I hope members will bear with me.

I'm bound to say that I find the issues of BING of increasing interest. Indeed, I find myself reading it thro' several times, which must say a lot for the work that goes into it, researching the many aspects of Bing's great career, and not concentrating solely on his recording career, remarkable as that was.

Its good to note, too, how so many members are working to keep Bing's name alive, indeed, prominent. I would like to congratulate for example Johnny Jones and Arnold Baker for being featured so interestingly in the Irish Sunday newspaper and conveying just what Bing was and why he is so revered. It was good also to see the names of other Irish members being mentioned.

And John Marshall's recording was played on a broadcast Johnny was also involved in on the BBC, Ulster. I bet he never imagined the day would come when he was not only on the radio - but playing a record called THE BALLAD OF JOHNNY JONES! And John Marshall himself I would like to thank for sending me a copy of his recordings, which I enjoyed, all going towards keeping the memory of Bing vital.

Roy Chappell, too, has a fine showing on the LP record issued by the Bing Crosby Historical Society. His rendering of the two great standards DARN THAT DREAM and I HAD THE CRAZIEST DREAM are, for me, quite superb, and I managed to get the last-named broadcast over Radio Solent.

And may I say that I share the delight of all members that Bing's old university in Spokane has honoured him so fittingly with the bronze larger-than-life statue. It was good to know, too, that the big event was such a great success.

A member on holiday here at Easter left a request for some record information but the scrap of paper with his name and address is somehow missing. The date is: HIGH WATER Master CVE43117, recorded 28.2.28; THREE LITTLE WORDS Master PBVE 61013, recorded 26.8.30 and WISTFUL & BLUE, BVE37285, recorded 22.12.26.

And it would be unthinkable of me not to express my congratulations and thanks to John Bassett, Bert Bishop - and John Joyce for BING - JUST FOR THE RECORD; and Lionel Pairpoints PHILCO RADIO TIME. All treasured items for me.

STOP PRESS
FURTHER REPORT ON
THE GONZAGA EVENT.

THE SPOKANE CHRONICLE

SPOKANE'S FAVORITE

The only thing missing from the massive tribute to Bing Crosby on the Gonzaga University campus yesterday was Bing Crosby himself. The fabulous crooner was there in spirit as his family members, long-time friends, and fans from around the world gathered to give him honor.

He was certainly there in bronze as a larger-than-life statue of him in casual pose was unveiled by his lovely wife Kathryn, his sister Mary Rose Crosby Pool, his long-time friend, the Rev. Arthur Dussault, S.J., vice-President of Gonzaga University, and by Deborah Copenhaver, the young sculptor.

Kathryn Crosby gently touching the foot of the statue and looking up, smiling, into the bronze face of her late husband was a moving moment and certainly the high-point of the unveiling ceremony. But it was by no means the only meaningful moment of the day.

A crowd of hundreds listened to a message read from President Reagan, a message that was both a tribute to Bing Crosby and congratulations to Spokane on the start of this city's centennial celebration.

> "How we all miss Bing," read the president's message.
> He warmed our hearts."

Another high point of the ceremony was a telephone call from Bob Hope, long a friend of Crosby. "I wish I could be there with you," Hope said during the call, which was broadcast over the public address system.

The Very Rev. Bernard Coughlin, S.J. President of Gonzaga was, for a few moments, a straight man for Hope as the world-famous comedian made good-natured priest jokes and Jesuit jokes. (About Bing: "Anyone with all those kids who can play a priest deserves an Oscar.")

Hope then went on to pay his own tribute to Crosby: "He was a great man, a great talent."

The massive crowd gathered in front of the Crosby Library included Crosby fans from as far away as England and Brazil.

> Students filled the balconies of a nearby dormitory
> with signs: "BING LIVED HERE".

As comedian and impressionist Rich Little came to the podium, the students unfurled a Canadian flag. Both Little and emcee Gordon Atkinson producer of the radio program THE CROSBY YEARS, and a long-time friend of Crosby, are from Canada.

The crowd seemed to enjoy especially Little's impressions of presidents Reagan, Nixon, Ford and Carter. But while it was the students who cheered loudest for Little, it was the entertainers of the Crosby era who evoked emotion in the many Crosby fans present.

Jimmy Van Heusen, composer of some of Crosby's most beloved songs, including SUNDAY, MONDAY, OR ALWAYS, and SWINGING ON A STAR, came to the podium, took off his jaunty red hat and in a heavy, gravelly, voice told of his long association with America's best-loved singer. Phil Harris, famous entertainer from the big band era, also shared his memories - memories that included hunting and fishing with Crosby.

"He's probably up there playing nine holes right now," Harris quipped, pointing heavenward.

The tributes continued. Those coming to the podium for brief speeches and those paying silent tribute in the audience included Gov. John

Spellman, Mayor Ron Blair, representatives of Crosby's Pro-Am Tournament, Crosby Fan Club presidents from England and from around the United States and dignitaries of Gonzaga.

> ROY CHAPPELL, Crosby impressionist from England, did an incredibly accurate rendition of WHEN THE BLUE OF THE NIGHT. It was eerie sitting there hearing that Crosby-like voice vibrate out through the crowd gathered to do him honour, out past the huge pictures of Crosby hanging from the facade of the Crosby Library, out over the campus where young Crosby spent his youth.

The tributes went on and on. Crosby was "unique", "the greatest singer of songs who ever lived", "one of America's most loved sons", "one of a kind", "filled with love and music", and a man "who brought happiness and entertainment to people all over the world".

The tributes went on into the night as Phil Harris lead off a galaxy of entertainment focussed on Spokane's most famous artist.

Kathryn Crosby told the crowd "Thank you for taking me to your heart. You are his (Bing's) friends..."

> IT WAS TRUE. SPOKANE YESTERDAY WAS FILLED WITH "FRIENDS OF BING" EXPRESSING THEIR LOVE FOR "SPOKANE'S MOST FAVORITE SON".

Editor: It is only fair to point out that Roy Chappell strongly objects to the description "Crosby-impressionist". Roy has a voice of his own; he idolised Bing and inevitably, by singing Bing songs, there are bound to be echoes and nuances of Bing. "I just sing," says Roy " - and that's how it comes out!"

FASHION NOTE FOR THE LADIES (IF A MERE MAN HAS THE CHEEK!): Kathryn, although looking delicate and charming, had a distinctly masculine appearance in that she was, for a start, wearing a soft 'trilby' hat, plus a square cut jacket, white blouse or shirt - and a bow-tie!

*** JIM NEWELL has produced, for his SOUTHAMPTON BING CROSBY CLUB - a magazine! And a highly creditable effort it is, too. In fact, reading the articles by Norman Toogood (he of the poems), Ralph Gibbons and Alan Jenkins I slyly wonder why they don't put their talents at the disposal of BING! However, good luck to Jim and his colleagues - perhaps we'll see a new edition soon?

LESLIE GAYLOR asks: Has anyone a new condition copy of TOMORROW'S MY LUCKY DAY/STRAIGHT DOWN THE MIDDLE (45rpm), for perhaps an exchange for an unplayed copy of TIE A YELLOW RIBBON/ITS NOT WHERE YOU START.

*** JIM NEWELL'S address for Southampton members: 17 Edwina Close, Bitterne, Southampton, Hants.

OUR AUSTRALIAN MEMBERS have had their number increased by three while at home we have a correspondigg drop! ARTHUR WARING, HIS WIFE ANNE, and son ROBERT have departed the UK for Western Australia - 8 Salisbury St., Bayswater 6063, Perth, W. Australia in fact. We knew they were considering the move but it came as a distinct shock to hear from them actually Down Under. This was especially so when we received their letter as we were in the midst of the post-Easter blizzards, snow &c. and they were trying to adjust to temperatures of between 80 and 90 degrees! And they provide a typical Crosby item in their first letter!. Arthur writes:

"My wife is working in a hotel in Perth and recently they had a team of men and women golfers from New Zealand. One of the lady golfers, in conversation with Anne, told her that she had met Bing on a number of occasions because of golf. She went on to tell my wife what a wonderful man he was, modest, courteous, and always was very natural. Although we all already knew this it warmed our hearts to hear it all again - one of our early experiences in Australia..."

Editor: We hope the Warings (who left Middleton, Manchester) settle down in their new surroundings where they will, of course, continue to receive BING.

SPECIAL *******

We are delighted to hear from LEGEND MUSIC that because they have enlarged their order for MUSIC, MUSIC, MUSIC LP they can pass on a reduction in price. This excellent album, which includes Bing singing with brother Bob, can now be obtained for £4.50, + 75p P & P - total of £5.25 and NOT the price given on page 45., which amounted to £6.00.

LETTER (AMONG MANY OTHERS) FROM AMERICA:
(with apologies to Alistaire Cook):

I wish very much to join the International Crosby Circle. I have heard so many wonderful things about your organisation. To better introduce myself, perhaps, I should say that Bing was a favorite way back in the 30's when I was a young fellow. When Ken Twiss started the Bing Crosby Historical Society I became a member as soon as I heard about it. I am as active in it as time permits, as I also have a home in Arizona. I am a director of the BCHS.

We had a wonderful time a week ago, both at the "Third Annual Tribute to Bing in Tacoma", and at the statue unveiling in Spokane. They were both marvellous programs. We had the pleasure of having two gentlemen from England, Roy Chappell from Manchester, and Teddy Johnson from Surrey, on both of the programs. They were excellent - plus.

Also from England were two very fine ladies, PATRICIA O'BRIEN, and JENNY MILLS, whom my wife and I had the pleasure of driving to Spokane. We even stopped en route so they could gather some ash from the eruption of Mt. St. Helens. They were to put it in a little jar to take back to England.

It is the hope of my wife and I that one of these days we can get back to your country and attend one of the programs in honor of Bing. We have had so many from England come to Tacoma. Please excuse the kind of rambling, but whenever Bing is connected with it it seems that I do not know when to stop. Good luck to all of you, both personally and your work to keep the name of Bing where it truly belongs.

Sincerely, BOB LUNDBERG.

Editor: Delighted to have Bob among our US contingent - and we can take this opportunity to thank Bob and ALL the people in the States who were so kind and appreciative of the British contingent that journeyed so far in honour of Bing. We're certain all of our members who so travelled have a store of unforgettable memories. To visit the States is always a great experience. To have combined such a visit to coincide with the great Crosby events made it truly memorable.

Bing said "In Britain I have my loyalest fans..." Well, perhaps he meant it (perhaps its true!), perhaps he was being kind. Perhaps he said it in EVERY country! Whatever the truth, we know that despite our pride in Bing's regard for us America loved and loves Bing as much as we do. We're certainly not prepared to argue the point: BING BELONGED TO THE WORLD.....

SO, LEO LYNN PASSES ON.....

It wasn't until we heard a recording of the proceedings at the unveiling that we learned the sad news - from Phil Harris - that Leo Lynn had died. "A lovely man," said Phil. Who was Leo Lynn? Some may be asking so there can be no-one better than Bing to answer the question - in CALL ME LUCKY.

During my last year of high school and my first two years of college, a boy named Leo Lynn was one of my classmates at Gonzaga. One day in 1931, when I was new at Paramount, I was going into the studio and I saw Leo behind the wheel of a foreign-made limousine. He was wearing a chauffeur's cap but I recognised him right away. I couldn't forget him. He'd been a real shenanigan character in college, putting on impromptu entertainments and mimicking various actors and athletes.

When I'd said Hello, I asked "What are you doing?"
"I'm driving for the English actor, Clive Brook*", he said.
"How'd you like to work for me?" I asked him.
"You've hired a man!" he said.

Brook wasn't annoyed at my theft of his chauffeur. Leo found a substitute to take his place, and Clive is so aloof, in the traditional English manner, that I don't think he knew Leo had gone. In addition to chauffering for Dixie and acting as a factotum in the Crosby household, Leo was my stand-in. Contrary to the public's understanding of such things, a stand-in doesn't have to resemble the one for whom he stands in. Leo has my skin pigmentation and he's about my height. That's all the cameraman requires.

Leo is grateful to me, too, and perhaps the best way to describe how he feels about me is to report a thing that happened when I was at Pebble Beach playing in the annual invitation tournament. Trying to do any good for yourself in that event is about as tough as doing it in the National Amateur. The Pebble Beach draws almost the same infield that the National attracts and its played over one of the worle's toughest courses. I'm lucky if I qualify, let alone beat any of that field.
While I was at Pebble Beach, Leo ran into Johnny Burke in Hollywood. "Where's Bing," Johnny asked. "He's up at Pebble Beach for the tournament," Leo told him.
"How do you think he'll do?" Johnny enquired.

Leo looked at him scornfully and said, "If he's feeling good he'll win it."
Leo's loyalty is unreasonable and illogical, and I have been careful never to disillusion h . A man needs all the people like that he can get....Its not far off the truth to say he's become part of the family. He's seen all my kids grow up and spoils them outrageously. He brags about them and tells everybody how good they are....they call him Laughing Leo...All my movies are great to him...in addition to being my valet, chauffeur, stand-in and conductor of grand tours of the studios...he knows everybody in Hollywood and everyone at the studio knows him and likes him....he's my self-appointed publicity man..."

Editor: What a book LEO could have written! Another piece from the Crosby mosaic...
* Clive Brook was a distinguished British actor among others who played a big part in the Hollywood traditions. George Arliss, Herbert Marshall, Ronald Colman and Cary Grant come easily to mind.

The GEC radio listings, DISCROSBY, A CROSBY QUIZ, and reports of local meetings are unavoidably held over as there is pressure on space and/or - they have not yet been receiged. Back again in early September!

"BING NEVER REALISED THE TREMENDOUS EFFECT HIS EFFORTS HAD ON PEOPLE...."
Peggy Lee....

(On some copies. page 14 reads 10 owing to rearrangement. Reading continuity is not affected.)